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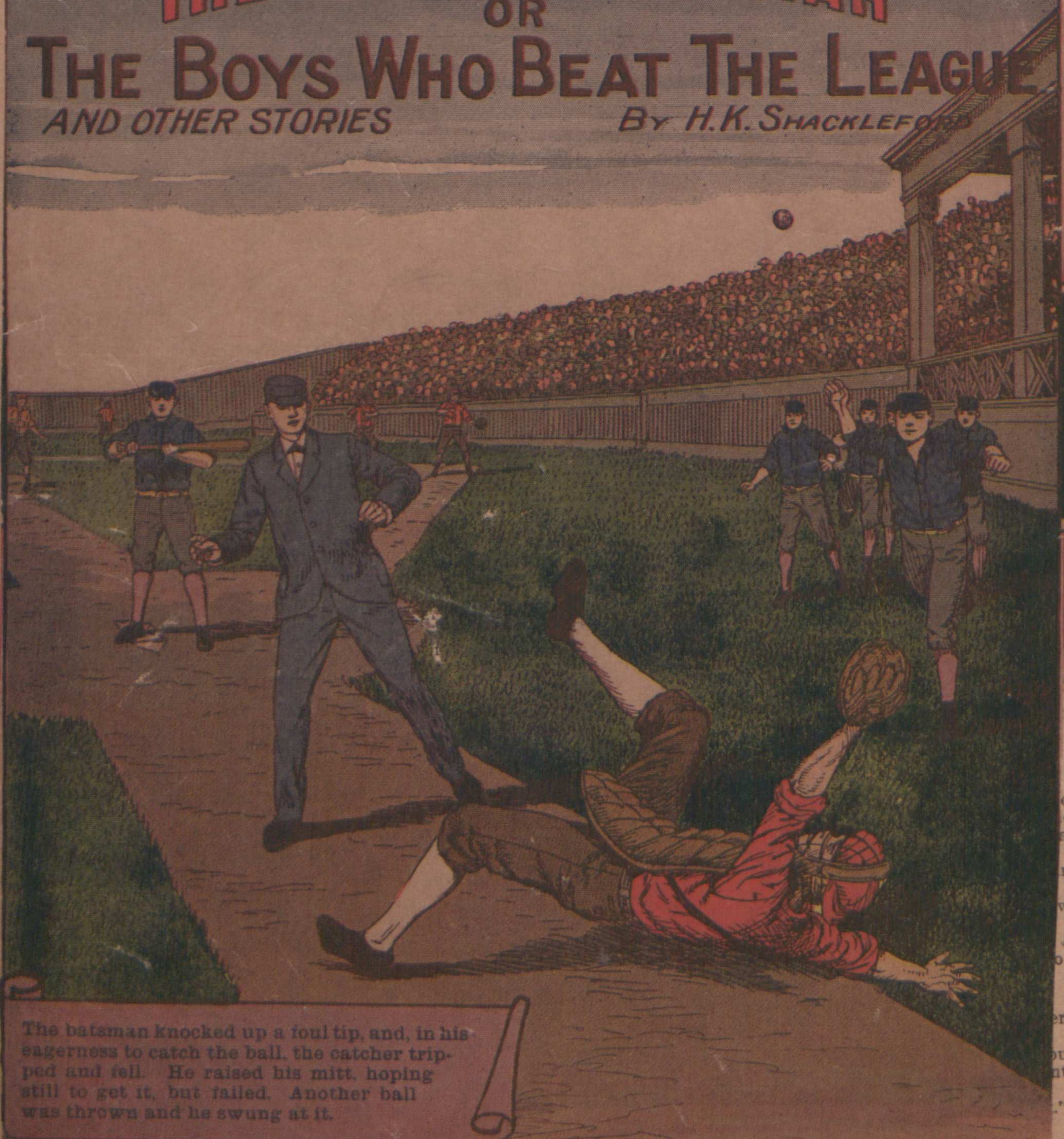
PUCK AND LUCK

THE NINE OF NINEVAH
OR

THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE LEAGUE

AND OTHER STORIES

By H. K. SHACKLEFORD



The batsman knocked up a foul tip, and, in his eagerness to catch the ball, the catcher tripped and fell. He raised his mitt, hoping still to get it, but failed. Another ball was thrown and he swung at it.



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PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure

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THE NINE OF NINEVAH

OR,

THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE LEAGUE

By H. K. SHACKLEFORD

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE NINE OF NINEVAH CAME TOGETHER.

In the little town of Ninevah, in the northern part of New York State, a factory employing about 150 hands, was the main support of at least two-thirds of the population. The village itself did not contain over 800 souls, hence there was a very limited supply of amusements. What there was in that line was of a very primitive nature and altogether lacking in both snap and vim. Nearly all the operatives were natives of the village or the country contiguous. They resented the coming of outsiders seeking work, as they held to the idea that only home people should be hired to do the work in the factory.

But one day a youth of about eighteen years of age came to the village from no one knew where, and applied to the superintendent for work. He was a handsome, well built, blue-eyed boy, with wavy chestnut colored hair, small feet and hands and having a hearty, cheery way about him that was calculated to win him friends anywhere. But when he went to work in the factory the boys and girls eyed him with looks that plainly said they didn't want him there.

One of the boys, Zach Childs by name, left his place, when the foreman was out, went over to him, and said:

"You are a stranger here?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I came in this morning."

"What is your name?"

"Sidney Dell."

"Where from?"

"I came from Utica here."

"Why did you come here to such a little place as Ninevah?"

"To get work," and he looked at Zach inquiringly.

"There is no more work here than our own people can do," said Zach, "and we don't like to have strangers come here and take it from us."

"Have I displaced any one? The superintendent said he was glad to have me work for him."

"No, but there are lots of our people who want work, though."

"Suppose you go to the superintendent and tell him so?"

"That's not my business."

"Is it your business to come and tell me?"

"I have made it my business to do so," was the reply.

"Well, let me advise you to attend to your own business and let mine alone."

"I don't want any advice from you."

"You seem to need it very much all the same."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, I do."

"Will you meet me after the factory closes and give me some of it?"

"With pleasure, provided you don't get a lot of scrubs like yourself to be there with you."

"Scrub! Take that, blame you!" and he aimed a blow at his head. But the blow was parried and he got one between the eyes that laid him sprawling on the floor. Dell glanced at him contemptuously and turned to his work. Zach scrambled to his feet and glared at the youth, who simply smiled back at him.

"Stop, Zach!" called out a middle-aged man. "You'll lose your place if you raise a row here!"

"I'll see you after six o'clock," said Zach as he turned to go to his own bench.

"I shall be very glad to see you," said young Dell.

Half an hour later another youth about the same age as Dell, also a stranger, was put to work by the superintendent. He was rather tall and slender, with coal black eyes and hair. His place was next to Dell's.

"Stranger here?" Dell asked him.

"Yes—came in just now."

"So am I. These fellows here don't want any strangers in the place. We had better stick together after six o'clock. Got a boarding place?"

"No. The superintendent told me he'd get one for me."

"Told me the same thing. Guess he'll send us to the same place," and then he told him of the trouble he had just had with one of the hands.

The second youth's name was Tom Gillette, who had been in hard luck, he said, and run down at the hub.

When six o'clock came a boy came up to Dell and Gillette and said:

"The superintendent told me to show you round to Mrs. Babcock's boarding-house. Come on."

"All right—lead the way."

He led the way down-stairs to the street door. There he was met by the assistant superintendent.

"I'll take them there, Joe," and the boy left. Dell and Gillette saw Childs and a half dozen others eyeing them as they went by. But they dared not make any demonstration in the presence of the assistant superintendent.

At the boarding-house, Dell told the assistant superintendent what had happened in the mill.

"Ah! I'll nip that game right now," and he went out in search of Childs. He found him with six others.

"See here, Zach," he said to him; "if you make any trouble with those fellows it will cost you your place. Do you understand?"

"Yes; did he tell you?"

"Yes, but not till he saw that you had six others with you. I think you are a coward, Zach."

Zach bit his lip. He had to take it. It wouldn't do to make trouble with the assistant superintendent unless he wanted to lose his place. But he said:

"You have no right to say that, superintendent."

"Haven't I?"

"No."

"Well, if you'll settle the matter with him by yourself, I'll

take it back. But everyone who helps you shall lose his place for life in the mill. Do you understand that, boys?"

"Yes, sir," they replied.

"Very well. Now you are at liberty to tackle him whenever you please, without fear of losing your place. I don't think you dare meet him like a man," and the superintendent smiled as he made the remark.

"You'll see," retorted Zach.

"All right. If you get any one else to help you, I'll see that you are discharged from the mill. If the superintendent sees fit to put any one to work, it is no business of yours to interfere," and with that he passed on his way. It was soon known among the mill hands that to interfere with the newcomers meant a discharge, so they dropped the matter then and there.

But Zach was in a predicament. He was very popular among the mill girls, and the knockdown he had received would ruin him among them if he did not offset it in some way. The girls nagged him till he drew desperate, and on the third day, in the presence of a score of them, he attacked Dell, and was thrashed so quickly and so thoroughly it made him sick for four days.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed pretty Emily Austin, "and he is older and larger than Dell, too."

"Yes, indeed!" said Josie Raines; "that Dell must be an awful man to fight. It was done so quickly, Zach didn't know what had happened to him."

For a week the two newcomers were left severely alone by all the operatives. They went home from the mills and spent their evenings together at the boarding house. Mrs. Babcock declared they were the nicest young men she ever had in her house. She had a daughter about eighteen years of age, who helped her run the house. Jennie Babcock was pretty and fond of dancing, and one evening she asked Dell if he could dance.

"I believe I can," said he, laughing.

"Well, old Joe McCleaver is coming here to-night with his violin, and I think we can make up a set and have a little fun."

"Count me in," he said, "and let me have you for a partner."

She laughingly agreed and about eight o'clock she sent up word to his room that old Joe had come. He and Gillette went down-stairs and found three other girls there. They were not mill hands. Two young clerks were also there. One of them boarded in the house. So the set was made up and such a dance they had! Jennie declared that both Dell and Gillette were the best dancers she ever saw. So did the other three girls.

Then Dell took the old violin, which was really a very good one, and made the old man turn green with envy by his playing. Then he sang some new songs which had never been heard in Ninevah before. The girls were charmed and did not hesitate to say so. In a few days it was known among the girls in the mill that Dell and Gillette were really nice fellows who could dance, sing and play, a combination of accomplishments possessed by very few young men in the village.

From that time the mill girls began to relent and smile on them. But the two newcomers did not appear to see the change. They went on in the even tenor of their way, dressed well and became very popular with the girls and village clerks who did not have anything to do with the mill.

One evening Dell suggested to Gillette that they organize a baseball nine, saying:

"I see some fellows here, who, with a little coaching, can make first-class players."

"Do you understand the game?" Gillette asked him.

"Yes—from A to Izzard."

"So do I."

"Ever play?"

"Many a time. I am up to all the rules and the latest curves and twists."

"So am I. Never saw but one man who could pitch a ball better than I can."

"Great Scott, man, let's get up a nine! If we can find work for two other fellows here, I can send for them at once. They are crack players, too."

That very evening they enrolled five names besides their own—all clerks. The next evening they got a young blacksmith who could knock a ball sledge-hammer blows, so they needed but one more and soon managed to get him—the minister's son.

They met after six o'clock in an old field behind the school house every afternoon to practice. Dell was amazed at their

aptitude and the easy way they had of absorbing all the points he and Gillette gave them.

Suddenly Dell said to Gillette:

"Tom, we have the stuff here to win match games. Why shouldn't we do it?"

"Yes, why shouldn't we?"

"Let's adopt a name and get uniforms—what do you say?"

"Good—let's have it."

The next evening they proposed the matter to the Nine, and they jumped at it. They agreed to organize and challenge Nines of other towns.

"The Nine of Ninevah," is a good name," said Dell. "Let's have it."

"Good—let it go at that!" cried the others, and so the name was adopted. They elected Sidney Dell captain and pitcher, and adopted a uniform—red stockings and cap, with gray trousers and shirts with "IX of N" in white letters on the shirt front.

"Now let me advise the adoption of a rule," said Dell to them, out on the field one afternoon after an hour's practice, "and that is that no new member can join without the unanimous consent of the members."

They promptly agreed to that. A week later their uniforms arrived, and when they went out to practice with them on, nearly all the mill girls were on hand to see them. It was something new in Ninevah—any kind of a uniform.

One day Mr. Curran, the assistant superintendent of the mill, said to Dell:

"The home team at Utica has challenged any nine in the State to play them a game for gate money. Why not go down there and tackle them?"

"We will if we can make a match with them," he replied.

"I'll write down there and see what the chances are," Curran said.

"Do so, and if they are not the best team in the world, we'll make it interesting for them."

Four days later Curran got a letter from the captain of the Utica nine in which he was told to send down the boys on the following Thursday.

"The gate money will be between one and two thousand dollars," the letter read, "and your team can have every cent of it if they beat us."

"Come to my boarding-house to-night and read that to the boys," said Dell. "It will put new life into them. I am up in the game, Mr. Curran, and have seen some fine games. The Nine of Ninevah has some of the best individual players I ever saw. Will you go down with us?"

"Yes, I believe I will," and that at once worked up the entire village, for Curran was a solid man, and also one of the most popular men in the place.

CHAPTER II.

"THEY HAVE COME TO STAY!"

While Dell was coaching the boys every evening, out beyond the old school house the mill hands made fun of them, making sneering comments on the "kids in the little panties." But Dell and Gillette paid no attention to them. They had vowed never to have anything to do with the men in the mill. The girls they were willing to forgive, knowing that it was their nature to take the side of their brothers and sweethearts. The girls were now, since they saw that Dell and Gillette had come to stay, trying hard to bring about a sociable feeling among them. But the newcomers wouldn't have it, and so restricted their association to the young people who did not work in the mill.

When it became known that the Nine of Ninevah were going down to Utica to play the crack team of that city there, Zach Childs said:

"That will settle them. They'll get licked out of their boots and we'll have the laugh on them. Oh, we'll make 'em sick!"

"Sick will be no name for it," said Job Cassels. "They will want to lay down and die."

"I think you boys ought to be ashamed of yourselves," put in Bettie Cassels, Job's sister, a tall, pretty blue-eyed girl, who had been saying all along that Sidney Dell was the handsomest young man in the village. "You ought to back up our home team instead of trying to run it down."

"Back up nothing," said Job. "We ain't backing Dell and Gillette for anything. They don't belong here."

"But they have come to stay. They belong to Ninevah now," she said.

"Bah! They are intruders. We don't want 'em and they know it, too."

"Of course they know it—and laugh at you for a pack of fools," she retorted. "They seem to have nothing but contempt for you boys."

"Wait and see how it turns out. They won't have contempt for anybody when they come back from Utica."

"Well, I think it's a shame," she remarked.

"Oh, you're stuck on him," sneered Job.

"It's a pity there are no others about here for a decent girl to get stuck on," she retorted. "We girls like manly men—ask any of them," and she left them in a pet.

Zach was staggered. He was stuck on her himself, and her retort to her brother was a hard slap at him. Since Dell thrashed him, she didn't seem to have any use for him.

"That's tough, Job," he remarked to her brother.

"Oh, the girls all want us to make up with the interlopers. I, for one, won't do it!"

"No, nor I, either. I understand they have both said they'd never forgive the mill boys. I guess they will be pretty old before they hear me ask them to forgive me."

"I ain't asking anybody's pardon nowadays," said Job.

"No more am I," and they decided to remain the rest of their lives in that frame of mind.

When the day came for the trip to Utica not a soul from the mill went with them except Curran, the assistant superintendent, and the head bookkeeper. Several other citizens, though, went down, and quite a number of the village girls were at the station to see them off, relatives of the clerks in the team.

The Nine members were: Sidney Dell, Tom Gillette, Si Sturdivant, the young blacksmith; Phil Durham, Pete Boyden, Jack Haralson, George Gray, Tim Dempsey, Will Babcock.

They were in uniform and looked well and chipper, not one of them being over eighteen years of age, and two were but little over sixteen. But they were all active as cats and strong of limb, with pluck enough to tackle anything that came along.

Si Sturdivant saw Polly Gray, George's sister, at the station, and said to her that if she'd give him a kiss for luck they'd be sure to win the game.

She laughed, and said:

"Win the game first."

"Can I get it then?"

"Yes," and she laughed and blushed. Said he:

"All right—I'll win the whole game myself."

When they arrived at Utica they marched out to the ball ground, as they did not have money for carriage hire.

"Gee whiz, boys!" cried Si, when he saw some five or six thousand people in the inclosure. "Just look at the crowd! Where in thunder did they all come from?"

"Guess they live here," laughed Jack Haralson. "Utica is a big place. She can turn out a much larger crowd than this."

"Well, it scares me to look at 'em!" said Si.

"Now, see here, boys," said Dell, in a low tone of voice. "We have come here to play ball, and we must play for all we are worth. Let every one do his level best to win. Let me do all the talking with the umpire. You keep mum and obey orders. If we win it's \$250 for each of us. See?"

They said they would do their best and let him do the rest.

When the home team appeared the crowd cheered them lustily.

"They didn't cheer us one bit," said George Gray.

"Oh, wait till we show 'em what we can do," said Pete Boyden. "They'll cheer us then, I guess."

"Oh, they'll be too mad then," laughed Si. "Lord, but I'm going to smash that ball with a sledge hammer!"

"Dell says give 'em hot grounders so they can't catch us out," remarked Phil Durham.

"Yes, and I'm going to knock it so deep down into the ground I can make a home-run before they can dig it up," said Si, and the boys laughed heartily at his idea.

The captain of the home team came to them and asked:

"Who is your captain?"

"Here he is," said Gillette, laying a hand on Dell's shoulder.

"My name is Merritt—captain of the home team. This is Mr. Thurman, the umpire for all games played on these grounds."

Dell shook hands with Thurman, saying he wanted to be on good terms with the umpire.

"Are you ready to play?" the umpire asked.

"Yes, sir."

Then the game was called and the Nine of Ninevah went to the bat with Si Sturdivant to lead off. The home team pitcher sent him a twister and Si let it pass to the catcher. He let the second one go the same way. But he gave the third one an almighty smash that sent it bounding hot and swift out to left field. He dashed to first, hesitated a brief moment and dashed for second. The ball was coming to second. He dashed for third with an audacity that staggered the captain of the home team, and rested there.

"Very good, Si," said Dell. "Now, Phil, see if you can bring him home," and Phil Durham went to the bat. The pitcher gave him a beautiful curve, but Dell had initiated them into the mysteries of curved balls, so he smashed it way out to center field. Si passed over the home plate, and Phil pranced to second, beating the ball about half a second. Then Pete took up the willow and moved Phil up a base, stopping at first himself. Jack Haralson was caught out by the center fielder. George Gray gave the ball a tremendous smash and brought Phil home. Pete stopped at third and George at second.

"Now, Tim, do your best!" sung out Si, back on the bench. "Ireland to the front!"

Tim thrashed the air, and the ball nestled in the catcher's hand.

"Did ye get it, alana?" he asked of the catcher.

"I did, my son."

"Sure, thin, be afther giving it back till 'im."

The catcher laughed and returned the ball to the pitcher.

Tim wheeled and faced it again. It came in a curve. Whack!

He sent it bounding away out to center outfield and brought both Pete and George home. Not a soul cheered him. But Sidney Dell went up to him, and shook his hand.

Will Babcock smashed the ball to left field and was caught out. Then Dell went to the bat and fetched Tim home and got there himself as the ball was over the fence. Gillette was the last. He smashed a ball to the left, but was caught out.

"Score six!" called out Si, as they retired to the field.

Dell went into the box and Gillette put on the mask and gloves. The crowd cheered the home team lustily as they went to the bat. But it didn't last long, for the first man failed to hit the ball. He didn't understand Dell's curves and twists.

"Hello! How's this?" sung out a voice in the crowd.

The second man shared the same fate, and murmurs of surprise were heard on all sides. Dell was cool as ice, and Gillette equally so.

The third man was nervous as he took up the willow. He thrashed the air twice. Then the whole crowd rose to their feet to watch the third ball.

"Hold the bat still and I'll hit it for you," said Dell.

"Bet you can't," said the batsman.

"All right—hold it steady," and Dell fired the ball plump against it. It bounded high up in the air and landed in Gillette's hands.

"Out!" yelled the umpire, and the home team went to the field again. Their captain called them around him for one brief minute.

"See here, boys," he said, in a half whisper. "This is a snag. We've got to do our best or we are done for."

They were all rattled. It was so entirely unexpected.

"Be careful and do your best," he said, and the next moment the umpire sung out:

"Play ball!"

They hurried to their places and the game went on. Everyone wore an expression of wonder on his face. The Nine of Ninevah had looks of hard determination on theirs.

Si Sturdivant was again at the bat. He missed two balls when Dell called out to him:

"That'll do, Si. No monkeying now. Let the other fellows do that."

Si smashed the third one like the crack of a rifle, sending it far out to center field, and went scurrying around the diamond at full speed.

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT GAME AT UTICA.

The Uticans had never seen such batting before. The ball went clear out of reach of the outfielder and he had to chase it. Si sprinted like a deer and Dell turned and watched him speeding from base to base. He got to third and was going to rest there.

"Home with you!" Dell yelled.

He dashed forward again and made a ten-foot slide to get at the plate in time.

That was too much for the crowd. They yelled like Indians, though their home team was losing.

"Good boy!" cried Dell.

Tim Dempsey could not hold in his enthusiasm. He looked at the crowd, and sung out:

"Are yez looking at us?"

"Betcher life we are!" yelled a boy in the crowd, and a roar of laughter followed.

"Kape yer eyes on the score, me bye! Shure, an' we'll woipe up the ground wid 'em!"

"Keep quiet, Tim!" ordered Dell.

"I ain't doing a thing to 'em!" said Tim.

That was the only run they made in that inning, and they went to the field with seven runs to their credit.

The home team made two, and the Nine of Ninevah went to the bat for the third inning.

They did some fine batting, but failed to make a run.

In the fourth and fifth neither side made a run. The home team was getting down to hard work, and good work they did.

In the sixth the Ninevahs made one run and the home team two, making the score stand 8 to 4 in favor of the visitors.

In the seventh the home team's work was fine. They gained two and the visitors made nothing. The score was 6 to 8. The interest was lively, and the home team felt confident of making up and winning. But they made no gain in the eighth inning, and the ninth opened with two majority against them on the blackboard.

The Ninevahs made one run and went out.

It looked bad for the home team. They would have to make four runs to win, and it looked like an impossibility. But they made two runs in quick succession. The crowd yelled in frantic joy as they were made.

Dell was cool and unmoved as the fourth man took up the willow. He gave him some curves which rattled him and he thrashed the air in a vain endeavor to hit the ball. He gave way to the next man and he too shared the same fate. Only a glimmer of hope remained to the home team, and yet that glimmer nerved them to do their best. The seventh man missed it twice, and then the crowd rose and looked on in breathless silence.

"Sidney, dear!" called out Tim, "it's mesilf as is looking at yer!"

Even Dell had to laugh, while the crowd roared.

"Shure, an' the ball is too swate to give it to the loikes av him. Let the catcher have it, alana!"

The crowd yelled with laughter, and Dell fairly shook with merriment at the young Irishman.

"For the love av Hivin, be careful wid yer curve!" went on Tim, in his plaintive, persuasive way. "Sure, an' it's ruined we'll be av he gets on to it!"

Swish!

Spat!

He missed.

Gillette caught the ball and the game was won by the Nine of Ninevah.

The expressions of disappointment heard on all sides showed how fully the crowd had counted on the home team's winning. Tim began an Irish jig with a wild whoop, and in less than thirty seconds the crowd turned its attention to him. He was an expert, and his dancing was splendid.

"Come out, alana!" he cried, looking at the girls in the crowd. "Come out an' dance wid me for the love of ould Ireland! Whoop!"

Instantly two rosy-cheeked Irish lassies ran out and joined him. The crowd screamed. Here was peaches and cream for them—an unexpected treat. Pete Boyden, who was also a good jig dancer, joined them.

"Whoop!" yelled Tim. "Yez are the swatest things that iver came out of the ould dart!" and he changed positions with the young beauty in front of him. She was game and made her feet fairly fly.

Then the Irish spirit broke loose.

"Hurroo for Ireland!" yelled an old Irishman, and a thousand Celts responded.

"Come out, ivery son av the ould dart!" the old man yelled, throwing off his coat and joining the dancers. The musicians struck up some lively jig music, and a moment or two later half a hundred men and women, young and old, were patting the earth with their feet, to the music they loved so well.

"Whoop!" yelled Tim.

"Whoop!" chorused a score of others, and the crowd roared and shook with laughter.

Suddenly Tim seized the girl round the waist and kissed her rosk cheek. She broke away and ran back to her friends, the crowd yelling like lunatics.

In a few minutes they had raised such a dust with their feet they had to stop dancing.

"Three cheers for the Irish lad!" sung out somebody, and again they cheered.

"Now for the Irish lassies—the smartest in the worruld!" yelled Tim, and the roar was like a storm at sea. Tim had captured the crowd with his wit and funny enthusiasm.

The home team captain went up to Dell and shook hands with him, saying:

"You won fairly. It was a remarkable game in that the umpire was not once appealed to."

"Thank you, sir. It was a close game. Seven of our Nine never played a match game before. Only the catcher and myself have had any experience."

"You have profited well by it, I must say. Sturdivant is the best batter I ever saw."

"He is a blacksmith and can hit hard," laughed Dell.

Curran ran up at that moment and extended his hand to Dell, saying:

"I congratulate you! It was a splendid game from start to finish."

"Thank you, Mr. Curran. Will you help me get the money and take charge of it for us?"

"Yes, with pleasure."

The crowd began to disperse, though several hundred stood about Tim to laugh at and enjoy his jokes. Dell finally called him to join the Nine, but he asked for the name of the girl who had danced with him and got it before he joined Dell.

It was a shock to the home team to be thus beaten by an unknown Nine, from a little almost unknown village up the State. They could hardly pull themselves together and leave the ground in a body.

Curran telegraphed to Ninevah:

"Ninevah won the game and \$2,900 gate money. Dell a marvelous pitcher and Sturdivant a great batter, while Dempsey is a circus. Curran."

The telegram was sent to the superintendent of the mill. He read it to the clerks, and then gave it out to the operators.

The girls cheered, but the men were silent. They did not quite understand how Dell and Gillette had managed to do it, and had little to say about it. Bettie Cassels looked over at Zach Childs and laughed tauntingly. He was mad enough to fight but said nothing. Her brother Job was in the same frame of mind when she said to him, after they left the mill at six o'clock:

"The girls are going to meet the Ninevah Nine at the station when the train comes in."

"You girls are a lot of geese," he replied, and she laughed and retorted:

"Better be a goose than a fool."

At nine o'clock that evening nearly all the villagers were at the station to cheer the boys on their return.

"Give 'em a rouser, boys!" said old Bob Gray. "They deserve it! Here comes the train! Stand back there! Hooray for the Nine of Ninevah!"

"Hooray!"

"Hooray!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE GATE MONEY.

"Great Scott, boys!" exclaimed Will Babcock, looking out of the car window on hearing the cheering, "the whole town is here!"

The others looked out and saw the crowd.

"Well, this beats the Nine!" exclaimed Si Sturdivant.

"Guess they ain't here to meet us," said Phil Durham.

"You can bet they are," said Gillette. "We are the cocks of the walk now. Just listen to that, will you! They are cheering the Nine of Ninevah. Success means everything nowadays. Here we are. Keep together and follow Sid and Mr. Curran."

Curran led the way out to the platform of the station. He was popular with everybody. When they saw Dell the crowd broke loose again, cheering wildly. Everybody wanted to shake hands with him. Jennie Babcock, the pretty daughter

of his landlady, was the first girl to extend her hand to him. "I told you we'd beat 'em," laughed Dell, as he shook her hand.

"And I am the only one in Ninevah who believed you," she replied.

"So you are," and just then Will, her brother, came up. She caught him round the neck and kissed him.

"Just pass that round, Jennie," said Gillette, drawing his sleeve across his mouth and puckering at her. She laughed and shook her head roguishly.

Bettie Cassels grasped Dell's hand and said:

"We are proud of our boys and congratulate you on your victory."

"Thank you very much," he replied. "I suppose the boys in the mill didn't send us any congratulations?"

"No, I think not. They don't feel well to-night. Oh, there's little Tim! He is the circus!" and she went for Dempsey, the bright Irish lad. The other girls and a lot of old men all struggled to shake his hand. Tim saw his chance and kissed a dozen of them, including a few elderly women by mistake.

"Och, yes," he sung out. "It's mesilf that's ating the chewing gum."

The crowd yelled, the girls blushed and backed out, whilst Tim kept up the pucker, till his mother slapped it in for him with:

"Chew that awhile, darlint."

"Bedad, it's swate, but I don't want any more av it," he laughed, and so the fun went on.

"Tell us about the game, Curran!" cried a popular merchant in the crowd.

"It was a fine game," he said, "and I am going to back the Nine of Ninevah against any Nine in the State."

The crowd cheered, and he went on and told all about the game—the marvelous pitching of Dell, the fine batting of Sturdivant, and fun made by Tim.

Then they called for Dell. He tried to get away, but they caught him and rushed him upon a box out there on the platform.

"Good friends," he said, in clear, ringing tones, "Mr. Curran has told you about all that happened down there. We went there to do our best. I had hopes of winning, for I knew we had a good Nine. I had been in Nines before, and knew a good baseball player when I saw him. These are the best boys to manage I ever saw. Only one got loose from me—little Tim—and I don't believe anybody can hold him in when he feels good. He had no end of fun with the girls down there, and I know he kissed one of them, for I saw him snatch it on the fly."

"Rats!" cried Tim. "I got it on the mouth!" and the crowd yelled.

"Yes, so he did," laughed Dell, "and he danced for joy. I am glad to hear Mr. Curran say he is ready to back us against any other Nine in the State, for it seems he is the only friend we had in Ninevah when we left here this morning. In the presence of all of you I thank him for standing by us as he did, and pledge him that we intend to do our best to win every game we play. We are going to practice every day until we can beat any Nine in the League, no matter where they come from. I am one of those who believe that what is worth while doing at all is worth while doing well. We have won gate money enough to enable us to go anywhere to play, and Mr. Curran is our treasurer. In behalf of the Nine I thank you all for your kind reception this evening, particularly the ladies."

They cheered him and many again shook hands with him as he stepped down off the box.

Curran stepped up to him, and said in a half whisper: "You have told the crowd that I have the money. That was wrong. There may be some bad men in this crowd. You and Gillette had better come home with me, as I am not armed."

"All right," and he hunted up Will Babcock, who was with his mother and sister, and told him that he and Tom would be along inside of half an hour. They then went on home, while Dell and Gillette started off with Curran.

Curran lived on the edge of the village in a large house, surrounded by a grove of elm trees. On the way they saw no one, and Curran thanked them at his door, and sent them home. But on the way back they saw two men dodge behind trees, as if eager to escape being seen.

"That means trouble for Mr. Curran, Tom," whispered Dell to Gillette.

"Yes, I think it does. What shall we do?"

"Get arms and come back to lay for 'em," said Dell.

"But where can we get arms?" Tom asked.

"Will has a double-barrelled shot gun, and so has Si. You go and get Si's and meet me at the old school house."

On reaching his boarding-house Dell found Will, his mother and Jennie waiting for him. The landlady had set out a nice cold lunch for him. He now had money, and she was disposed to make a star boarder out of him.

"Where is Tom?" Will asked.

"He is waiting for me with Si Sturdivant's gun. I want yours."

"What in thunder is the matter? What do you want a gun for?"

"I told the crowd Mr. Curran had the money, and he said I did wrong. So I did, and Tom and I are going to guard his house all night."

"That's right!" exclaimed the widow, "Will's money is there—and all the boys'. Get the gun, Will. I like to see a man acknowledge his mistakes," and she looked pleased as she spoke. She fixed up a lunch for him to take to Tom.

Dell bade them good-night, and went away with the gun. He found Tom waiting for him at the old school-house, and together they stole round to the rear of Curran's house, and took up a position where they could see any one approach it without being themselves seen.

They waited fully three hours and had almost made up their minds, when they saw two dark forms going up to the window on the south side of the house. Dell clutched Tom's arm and they stood and watched them in the clear starlight. They went up and stood under the window fully ten minutes, as if listening to see if anybody was moving in the house. Then one was lifted up on the shoulders of the other, and Dell and Tom could hear faint sounds of some kind of instrument on the window.

"Better let 'em have it," whispered Tom.

"Let one get in," said Dell, "and then pepper the other. When he comes out we'll get him."

Soon the one on the shoulders of his pal disappeared into the open window. The other one stood there to watch and wait.

Dell raised his gun and fired, peppering the villain and the house. The man gave a yell and went bounding away like a deer. Tom gave him a load as he ran, and another yell escaped him. The next moment the other villain came flying through the window. He landed on his feet, but stumbled and fell.

Bang!

Dell fired, and he too yelled like a Comanche as the bird shot stung him from head to foot.

Bang!

Tom gave him one, and he sprang up and ran like a deer, disappearing round the house.

"Who is it?" sung out a voice from the house.

"That's Mr. Curran!" said Dell, and then he called out to him:

"Oh, is it you, Dell? What in the world is the matter?"

"Burglars!"

"Burglars! Where?"

"They were trying to get into your house. They are gone now, and each of 'em has two loads of bird shot for his share of the fun."

"Well, well! How came you two to be here?"

Dell told him, and then he made an examination of the window and found that a pane of glass had been cut out and the fastening drawn from the inside. He looked for the money and found it safe.

"Well, you boys saved it," he said. "I don't know how to thank you enough."

"Oh, we are interested, you know," laughed Dell. "Just go back to bed and we'll stand guard till morning."

CHAPTER V.

BETTIE AND DAISY.

Ninevah was the center of an intense excitement when the news of the attempt to rob Curran's house was known the next morning. Nearly every man, woman and child in the village visited the grounds of his residence, and gazed at the mutilated window and the hundreds of shot marks on the wall beneath it. Even the mill men, who so hated Tom and Sidney, went to see it.

Curran told the crowd of the part Dell and Gillette had taken in it, saying they had saved him and the money. A dirty handkerchief, with two holes in it, was found near the

house. It had probably been used as a mask by one of the robbers. The crowd stared at it with the deepest interest.

"Who were they, I wonder?" nearly everyone said, as he looked around.

"Somebody must have some shot in his hide," said Curran. "Let everybody look out for them. I'll pay one hundred dollars for their arrest. If they live here we ought to catch them. If they were strangers, let any one seeing strangers about yesterday or last night report that fact to the constable."

By noon it was known that two mill hands were missing, and Zach Childs was one of them.

People were amazed. Zach was not considered a bad man, except as a quarrelsome fellow. Both Tom and Sid declared they could not recognize the men they shot, as they could not see their faces.

The Nine of Ninevah were jubilant over the saving of their money. Each one was paid his share in the afternoon at the little village bank. They opened accounts there, and each had over three hundred dollars to his credit.

In the evening they met at Dell's boarding-house, and voted to put up fifty dollars each as a team fund, to be used for the benefit of the club. Mr. Curran advised them to do so.

Two days passed, and the two mill men who had disappeared had not shown up. The constable went to Mrs. Childs' house, and asked where Zach was. She was pale as death, and said she did not know—that he had been talking about leaving Ninevah for Buffalo for some time.

"I remember hearing him speak of that," said Job Cassels, when he heard it. "He told me two weeks ago that his mother was so opposed to his going that he'd have to slip off from her. I don't believe Zach would steal."

"I never thought he would myself," said Curran, "but his disappearance at this time looks suspicious to say the least."

The Utica papers came to Ninevah full of glowing accounts of the game. Dell's pitching and Sturdivant's batting seemed to have rattled the home team. Then came a laughable account of Dempsey's jig dance, and the good-natured participation of the crowd. The young girls who danced with him were named, and Tim cut out their addresses, saying he'd see them again some day.

Jennie Babcock persuaded her mother to let her give a supper to the Nine. The widow was eager to have them meet at her house, as each member was soon to be old enough to marry, and she had girls growing around her. Besides, it made her boarding-house popular. Jennie sent invitations to each member, telling him to bring a girl with him.

Then all the girls in the village smiled at the Nine members, and eagerly sought to be one of the nine girls selected to attend the supper. At the mill Dell and Gillette were surrounded by them.

"Whom are you going to take to the supper?" Bettie Cassels asked Dell.

"I don't know yet. I want a mill girl, but they all treated me so badly when I came here I am afraid to ask one of them."

"No, see here, Sidney Dell," she said to him. "We are just like any other girls. This mill is the only support for a good many families in Ninevah, and we all want to see that the home people get the work. As soon as we saw you were a good fellow and one of us, we at once dropped that feeling toward you and Tom."

"But the men have not—your brother among them," said Dell.

"They see that you and Tom have never forgiven them, and so they still feel that way. Now, I am not seeking an invitation to go with you or any one else, though I am as fond of parties as any other girl. But I would like to select a girl for you."

Dell looked at her in no little surprise. She was the prettiest and brightest girl in the mill, and he had made up his mind to ask her to go with him. He had heard how she had spoken kindly of him to her brother and other mill men.

"Who is she?" he asked.

"Come with me where we can't be heard and I'll tell you," and they walked away from the others.

"You know little Daisy Miller?" she asked him.

"The little black-eyed girl in the brown dress? Yes."

"Well, she is modest, sweet and retiring. She is the sole support of an invalid mother, hence she can't use any of her wages for dresses. That's why she can't go anywhere. The boys neglect her."

"But as she has no dresses for such parties how can she go?" Dell asked.

"You write her and I'll fix her up. It would be a ray of sunshine in her life that would last for months."

"See here, Bettie," he said, looking admiringly at her. "You are a girl in a thousand. I like that sort of spirit in a girl. I was thinking of asking you to go, but I'll follow your advice and ask Daisy. But I want you for a friend. You have good sense, with a good heart."

She laughed and said:

"I believe you have, too, and that's why I have spoken to you about her. I knew you would not think I was after you."

"I don't, but hang me if I ain't in a notion to get after you."

"When a fellow wants me he will have to come after me. I won't chase him," and she laughed roguishly as she spoke.

"You wouldn't run away from me, would you?"

"Chase me and find out," she laughed.

"Maybe I will some day," and then she said:

"Let me tell her you have asked me to ask her to go with you. That will give me an excuse to offer to fix her up."

"Very well. If you need anything in the way of cash in fixing her up, let me—"

"Oh, no! I've got a little bank account of my own, Mr. Dell."

"Good for you! You are a jewel, Bettie! If they were not looking at us I'd snatch a kiss."

"And get a slap. Don't go to getting spoony."

That evening Bettie walked home with Daisy Miller, and told her that Sidney Dell wanted her to go to the baseball supper with him.

It nearly took the little maiden's breath away, she was so astonished. Then she burst into tears and said she couldn't go—hadn't a thing to wear.

"Come, dear," said Bettie. "I can fix you up. You know how I love you. It won't cost much, and I'll fix you up so you'll be the prettiest girl there." Daisy said she'd go, as she never had any pleasure in life—had nothing to wear, and was half starved all the time, and then she cried again. Bettie soothed her and went to her home with her to get her mother's consent. When she got that she said she would do the rest, and Daisy was the happiest little maid in Ninevah.

The next day it was known in the mill that Dell had asked Daisy Miller to be his partner at the baseball supper, and the other girls were amazed. They asked her about it, and she told them he had sent Bettie to her with the invitation. They could not believe that Bettie had arranged it herself—did not even dream that she had.

"Now, Bettie," said Dell to her, "I want to choose an escort for you. I have an invitation for you, but won't give it unless you promise to accept it."

"I promise—who is he?"

"Gillette."

"Good enough," and she laughed. "Daisy will be so glad to have me there. You must do your best to make her have a good time."

"Of course. She is a pretty, sweet little girl, and I will do my best to see her through. By the way, I've got a bit of news that no one else knows yet. I'll give it to you. We have received a challenge to play a game in Rochester for gate money."

"My! If you win it you will all be rich!" she exclaimed.

"We are going to win. I am keeping the team keyed up to the winning notch."

"I wish I could see it," she said.

"Wait till we win one more game, and then we'll take a cartload of you girls to the next one."

"Good! I'll wait," she said. "You won't forget it, will you?"

"No—how could I? See here—we are engaged for that excursion—you to be my girl on that day—understand?"

"Yes, and I'll stick to you during the entire trip." She laughed and seemed happy. "But we must have Daisy along with us."

"Yes, of course."

CHAPTER VI.

TIM HOODOOS THE BAT.

All Ninevah was interested when the news was given out that Rochester had challenged. Half the people who were able to do so vowed that they would go with the Nine of Ninevah and see the game. Gussie Curran, daughter of the assistant superintendent of the mill, said if her father went she would go too. Fannie Mayes, daughter of Judge Mayes,

the richest man in the county, said she would go with Gussie. The judge was the president of the mill company. She had never associated with the village girls, being very high-toned in her ideas of social status. But the Nine had awakened a local pride among all the people of Ninevah, and all were eager to back them up and enjoy the excitement.

In the meantime the baseball supper came off at Mrs. Babcock's boarding-house. There were eighteen guests—the Nine and their girls. Daisy Miller was there with Dell, and hers was the happiest, sweetest face there. The supper was a fine one, and a basketful of good things were sent to Mrs. Miller long before Daisy returned home. They sang and danced till midnight. Dell created quite a surprise by his skill as a musician. He played on three different instruments, and his singing was fine. He had some new songs which he taught the Nine and their girls to sing with him. A jubilee song pleased them most of all, and they made the house ring with it. Si Sturdivant had Polly Gray with him, and during the evening got the kiss from her which she had promised to give him if they won the game at Utica. Each member had on a new suit and felt fine.

Tim Dempsey had a girl with him who was a foot taller than himself. He called her Miss Goliath, and told the crowd that he had to stand up on a chair, or stump, or fence, to kiss her.

The crowd roared with laughter, and she exclaimed:

"Why, you never kissed me in your life, Tim."

"No, darlint," he said, in his richest brogue; "you've always done that yourself. Now it's my time," and he climbed up on a chair.

"Oh, my! I n-e-e-e-ver!" and the girls and boys screamed with laughter.

"Oh, Belle!" the girls cried.

"I never kissed him in my life!" she protested, "and he shall not kiss me!"

She didn't like this joking that way. Tim began to cry, and the imitation was so perfect the party became almost hysterical. The other girls all ran up to him, kissed him and patted him on the head out of mock sympathy for him. He dried his tears, and made a mouth at his tall partner that sent them into convulsions.

When the young people of the village heard of the fun at the supper, they were green with envy because they were not there. Strange to say no ill-natured remarks were made by any one.

Dell was so attentive to Daisy Miller that she dreamed of him every night for a week. Bettie told him he had made her happy for the next three months, and she almost loved him for it.

"She is a sweet little girl," he replied, "and I am going to see that she has a show like the other girls."

"Good for you," said Bettie. "Her mother can't live a year longer, and then she'll be all alone in the world."

"Is it so bad as that?"

"I think it is."

"Then we must all try to make her comfortable in her last days."

"Yes. I hope you will look after that." When the day for the game in Rochester came, about thirty of the citizens of Ninevah went with the boys. Gussie Curran and Fannie Mayes were in the party. But the boys did not go about them, as they were afraid of such tony young ladies.

The crowd at the Rochester ball grounds numbered fully ten thousand. When the Ninevah boys appeared they were given a rousing welcome, cheering and waving of handkerchiefs. The boys doffed their caps and bowed all around them.

"Where's ther Irish bye?" sung out an Irishman in the crowd.

"Here I am!" cried Tim, waving his hat above his head. "Don't yez see me shillelah?"

The crowd yelled, and scores called to him to dance.

"I niver howld a wake till we've killed the corpse," he answered, whereat there came a roar that sounded like a storm.

The umpire finally called the game and the Nine of Ninevah went to the bat. The home pitcher was a stalwart fellow, who sent balls like cannon shots.

"Howly mither av Moses!" cried Tim, when he saw the ball whiz past Si. "Would yez be afther killing the bat?"

"Keep quiet, Tim!" cautioned Dell. "We have work to do to-day, and we had best do that first and laugh afterwards."

"Tare an' 'ounds! Work is it? Shure and I thought it's play we'd be after having!"

The crowd laughed and became merry at the very beginning of the game.

Si smashed the ball into a hot grounder and got the first base. Gillette followed and moved him up to second. Then Phil took up the willow and was caught out. Pete Boyden met with the same fate. But Jack Haralson moved them up another base and got to first himself. George Gray sacrificed Si home, and Gillette stopped at third.

Tim took up the bat and the Irish element cheered him loudly.

"Be aisy now, ye gossoon!" he called to the pitcher, and a roar followed. He thrashed the air and looked scared, to the intense amusement of the crowd. He struck again and missed. He seemed puzzled. Suddenly he laid the bat down and leapt over it, wheeled round, worked one foot under it, tossed it up and caught it in both hands.

"Now come on, ye gossoon!" he cried to the stalwart pitcher.

He smashed the ball a tremendous blow, sending it bounding way out to left field. Gillette dashed for home. Jack reached third, and Tim stopped at second, amid tremendous cheering.

"Now bring them home, Will," said Dell, as Babcock took up the willow. He smashed the ball out to center field and was caught out.

Tim rolled both fists into his eyes and blubbered like a spoiled child. How the crowd yelled and cheered him. The imitation was perfect and the crowd appreciated it.

The home team went to the bat and Dell into the box. He was a new pitcher in the field and every eye was on him. He was easy and graceful in his movements, and made a good impression on everybody.

He put out the first man in a few minutes, to the surprise of the home team and their friends.

"Bedad!" exclaimed Tim. "it's dizzy balls he's giving 'em!"

"Keep quiet, Tim!" called Dell.

"Shure, an' I ain't doing a thing to 'em!"

The next man missed three times in rapid succession.

"Lay it down an' jump over it, ye gossoon!" sung out Tim amid a roar of laughter.

The third man did lay it on the ground, jump over and kick it up, just as he had seen Tim do. Then he smashed the ball way out to center field and dashed to second to the surprise of everybody.

"Did jumping over the bat do any good?" Fannie Mayes asked of Gussie Curran.

"Why, didn't you see it did? My! Where are your eyes?"

The next man who went to the bat went through the same motions with it that the other did amid great laughter, and smashed out a hot grounder that sent him to second and the other to third.

"Shure, an' I'll hoodoo the bat!" cried Tim, placing one foot on the back of his neck, standing erect on the other, and pointing a finger at the next batsman, whilst the crowd screamed with merriment. He stood there in that position till the fellow missed three times!

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOODOO ON THE BAT.

It may seem absurd, not to say funny, that in an enlightened city like Rochester, people could believe in a hoodoo. But when Tim Dempsey pretended, in a most comical way, to hoodoo the man at the bat, and he made three straight misses immediately and thus retired his side to the field, the crowd stared in amazement for a few minutes. Then the more intelligent ones began to laugh. It became infectious and swept over the vast audience like an immense wave of hilarity. Men laughed till tears ran down their cheeks. Old sports fell against each other, held their sides and groaned. There are thousands, though, who believe in all they see and hear, and they believed Tim had placed a hoodoo on the bat or the man. Some sporting men, nearly all of whom believe in signs, luck and all that sort of thing, immediately began to hedge their bets.

"Do you believe in that sort of thing?" one man asked a hedging sport.

"Of course I don't, but it has scared the sand out of the home team. I am not throwing good money away, understand?"

The home team were mad, not because they believed Tim had done them any harm, but because he had set ten thou-

sand people laughing at them. Men can stand anything but that. Women can stand it better than men can.

"Say, young fellow," said one of the home team members, "you want to go slow on that monkey business, see?"

"What's the matter with you?" Tim demanded.

"We didn't come here for a monkey show," was the reply.

"Do you see any monkeys around here?"

"I see an imitation of one."

Here the home team captain interposed, and the umpire sung out:

"Play ball!"

Si went to the bat.

Tim went up to him and made all sorts of symbolistic motions over him and the bat, amid roars of laughter, finally pointing out the direction for the ball to go.

"Out of the way there, Tim!" called Dell, and Tim promptly obeyed.

The ball whizzed and curved at Si and he gave it an almighty whack, sending it out in the direction Tim had signaled. The crowd yelled, and Si dashed away for first like greased lightning. He was about to stop at first, but Tim yelled:

"To second wid yer!"

He dashed on, and Tim yelled:

"Slide! Slide!"

He did slide, and landed safe.

Gillette took the willow in hand, and Tim began his monkey business around him.

"Oh, go on away, Tim!" he laughed.

"Sure an' they git yer ball!" said Tim, as he turned away.

He was caught out.

"Howly mither av Moses!" cried an old Irish woman; "he wouldn't have it, an' now it's out he is!"

The hilarity of the crowd was such as had never been known in Rochester before.

The home team captain protested to the umpire that Dempsey was making the game a farce.

"He has violated no rule that I am aware of," said the umpire, "and the crowd seem to be enjoying the fun."

"So much for playing with a lot of boys," growled the captain.

"Just now they seem to be playing with you," retorted the umpire.

Phil Durham missed twice, and Tim ran up and laid his hand on his head. Then he made three passes in front of his face and retired. He smashed the third ball and got to first, bringing Si to third.

"We decline to go on with the game unless that monkey business is stopped," sung out the home team captain in a loud voice. "He is interfering with the game!"

A roar of derision greeted him from the crowd.

"Play ball!" yelled the umpire.

But the home team rallied around their captain and refused to play. The umpire was about to give the game to the Nine of Ninevah, when Dell sung out:

"I am sorry we have offended! We came here to play ball, win the game, and have a good time. I promise the home team to sit down on Tim Dempsey and see that the game shall be played without any more by-play. Tim, you must stop and keep quiet."

Tim laid down on the ground and called out:

"Sit down on me! I can stand it till we win the game, then I'll sit down on the whole town."

A roar of laughter swept over the crowd, and the game went on. Tim got up and sat on the bench till his time came to go to the bat. Then he went with a limp that provoked roars from the crowd. He looked shyly at the pitcher and knocked the ball straight out over center outfield. Shouts greeted him as he ran. He kept his eyes on the ball. He saw it go over the outfielder's head, and sped for all he was worth.

Si went over the home plate with Phil close at his heels. The crowd rose up and yelled like lunatics. Tim passed third while the ball was coming. He spurted as never before in his life, and slid to the plate amid a roar that rivaled the ocean in a storm.

The Nine of Ninevah took him on their shoulders and marched around with him. He threw kisses at the ladies, and they hurled flowers at him by the thousands. The band played, so great was the uproar, in the hope of quieting the crowd. Dell ran up to the boys and ordered them to the plate. He could not be heard, and had to give it up.

But they quieted down and the game went on. The Ninevahs made no more runs in that inning, and retired to the field with a score of five to their credit.

As they went to the field they received an ovation from the crowd. Tim had completely captured them, and they really wanted the Nine of Ninevah to win the game.

The home team did some fine batting and made two runs in that inning, though Dell put out two of them with his pitching. They gradually gained, till at the end of the eighth inning the score stood 7 for the Nine of Ninevah to 6 for the home team. In the ninth the home team did some fine work, holding down the Ninevahs to the score. Then they went to the bat for the last time, with the fact staring them in the face that they would have to make two runs to win.

"Now, Dell, darlint," pleaded Tim in his plaintive brogue, "don't be after doing a thing to 'em. Jist kape the shcore where it is, alana."

The crowd roared, and Dell sent his first ball to the bat. It landed in Gillette's hands.

"Arrah, Tommie, it's a jewel yez are!" cried Tim. "Let 'im thry it again, an' the saints betune us an' harrum!"

Swish!

Spat!

Gillette got the second ball, and Tim hugged himself, the crowd screaming with merriment.

"Aisy now, darlint! Tommie, accushla, look out for it! Shure, an' it's coming till yez!"

Swish!

Spat!

It nestled in the catcher's hands again, and the batsman threw down the willow in disgust. Another took it up, and Tim kept up his pleading to Dell, to the infinite amusement of the crowd. He, too, was put out by Dell's curves. The third man took up the willow. He was the ugliest man on the field.

"Och, now, would yez look at the beauty! Shure, an' he'll kill the ball wid the glance av him!"

But the fellow smashed the ball, sending it straight out to Si Sturdivant, who corralled it—and the game was ended.

Tim began jigging and the crowd to yell. A dozen Irish lassies ran out and danced with him. The crowd laughed and cheered, and others joined in till nearly two score were jigging for all there was in it. Not until the dancing ceased did any one leave the inclosure. Then great cheers from thousands told that the end had come, and the crowd slowly dispersed. Hundreds crowded around Dell and Tim to shake hands with them, whilst the home team turned away in supreme disgust over the defeat that had come to them at the hands of the Nine of Ninevah!

CHAPTER VIII.

JUBILANT NINEVAH.

The Ninevah boys were jubilant over their victory. It meant something like over five hundred dollars for each of them, and that was a fortune to them.

Mr. Curran joined them on the field and shook the hand of each of them, saying:

"You did splendidly, boys. I am proud of you. That is a crack team you beat and you ought to feel proud of it."

"Faith an' I do," said Tim. "They were hard to crack but we did it."

"Shall I take charge of the money for you, Dell?"

"Of course, and I'll try not to give it away again."

"I don't think we'll be troubled any more in that way, as I arranged with the cashier of the bank to meet us at the train and lock it up in the big safe right away."

"Good! I'm glad of that," and Dell laughed merrily. "I think it will pay us to give all our time to the game during the season. You can put someone else in my place."

"I am not sure but that is the best thing to do, as you will have to meet some League teams after this, probably, and you should give all your time to hard practice."

Curran telegraphed to Ninevah that the boys had won again, and the little town went wild with joy. The families of the members kept open house that evening, to receive the congratulations of their friends and neighbors.

On their arrival at the little station at midnight the whole town was there to welcome them. It was an ovation. Fannie Mayes had asked on the train that Tom and Tim be brought to her that she might congratulate them. Gussie Curran had already asked for Dell, and had introduced him to Fannie. She had laughed at Tim's fun-making till she had a headache, and she told him so.

"Let me hoodoo it," he said, and ere she knew it he was

brushing her forehead and temples with his dust-begrimed hands. As it was a warm day she was perspiring, and the result was comical. She had dirt streaks on her forehead and temples, at which Gussie went in convulsions of laughter. Fannie blushed at his boyish familiarity, but declared that she didn't have an ache left.

"Oh, my! Did he cure you?" Gussie exclaimed.

"I am sure he did, as I feel no more pain."

Tim laughed and was amazed at her words.

"Sure and the pain is in me heart," he said, pressing his hand over his left breast. "Faith, but I must kape away from the leddies. There's no fooling wid 'em. Sure, miss, but I bear the heartache for love av yez."

Fannie and Gussie screamed with laughter, for they recognized the irrepressible jollity of the boy in what he did and said. It was a jolly party, and all were in the greatest good humor when the train reached Ninevah. People who knew Fannie Mayes were surprised at seeing Sidney Dell escort her to her carriage. Tom Gillette escorted Gussie to the same carriage, where both bade them good-night.

Then the boys rallied round Curran to escort him to the bank, where the cashier received the money and locked it in the great safe. Late as it was, the crowd had to have a speech from Curran. He was a good talker, and for fifteen minutes he told of the different phases of the game. But the hoodoo business of Tim Dempsey staggered them. They couldn't get onto it, for they took it seriously, to the very great amusement of Curran himself. But Tim laughed and said:

"I had to do it, bedad. It was big money and I wanted it."

"But how did ye do it, me bye?" an Irishman asked.

"Shure an' ye'd be after knowing av I tould yez," he replied.

"Av coorse! Av coorse! Don't tell me, me bye!" and he backed off from him and crossed himself.

"Faith and I'll tell no wan," said Tim, eager to keep up the joke.

Bettie Cassels was there with a crowd of other girls. She met Sidney, and said:

"I am glad you won the game. You deserved to win it."

"Thanks," he said. "You girls must go to the others."

"Yes—you must not forget your promise to take us."

Jennie Babcock was there to meet her brother Will, and Dell escorted her back home. She was kept in continuous laughter all the way home by the story of Tim's antics on the field.

The next day the boys met Mr. Curran at the bank and had their share of the money paid over to them. Each one deposited his share in his own bank account, and then held a meeting at which they resolved to give up all work for the season, and devote their time to practice on the diamond.

Some of their parents objected, but the boys had their way about it, and so they began that very day. Before the day passed Dell received two challenges by telegraph. One was from Buffalo and the other from Cleveland. He read them to the boys and they danced for joy.

"Boys, we did a wise thing when we stopped work to practice," said Dell. "for both these teams belong to the League. We have got to do some fine work. We'll play Buffalo on Tuesday and Cleveland Thursday."

They yelled like young Indians, and each swore to do his best on the diamond from that day on.

Dell went to see Mr. Curran at his home that evening, much to the surprise of the wife and daughter, for they feared he had called socially. That they could not allow from a mill hand. They had talked the matter over that very day. Curran met him in the parlor.

"Mr. Curran," Dell said to him, "we have two more challenges, and probably others will come. We can't do without a business manager to look after the money part for us, and so we want you to take charge of us. We are willing to let you have a member's share for trouble and expenses, knowing you can't neglect business and go with us for nothing."

"That's business, and a good offer," said Curran. "I'll think about it and let you know in a day or two. You do well to have someone to do that part of the business for you. Let me advise you to impress it upon the boys to make it a matter of money—play to win for the money there is in it. Everyone of you is poor. If you win all your games each of you will be able to buy a home and set up in business."

"Just what I am figuring on, sir," said Dell. "I am going to make all I can out of it, and I think the boys are of the same notion."

The interview lasted but twenty minutes, and Dell went away without seeing Gussie or her mother. But he never

once thought of her, and on the way back called on Bettie Cassels, to her very great surprise. She was reading in her room and her mother met him at the door.

"Oh, is it you?" Mrs. Cassels exclaimed. "Come in!" and she was extremely cordial to him.

He had eight hundred dollars in cold cash now, and was in high favor with all the poor mothers with marriageable daughters.

"Is Bettie at home?" he asked.

"Yes," and she called to Bettie that Sidney Dell was waiting to see her.

Bettie came down, and was all smiles as she shook hands with him.

"Is it true that you are going to play in Buffalo?" she asked.

"Yes, and it's also true that you are going to see the game, is it not?"

"Yes, if you ask me to go."

"I do—and bring Daisy with you."

"Oh, Sidney! that is good of you! It would be the great day of her life. But I fear she can't go, as her mother is worse than usual."

"Sorry to hear that. See her about it, anyway, will you?"

"Yes, and let you know. But I hear you have quit the mill."

"Yes; playing ball pays better."

"How can I let you know about Daisy? I can't see you at the mill any more."

"Send me a note or tell Jennie Babcock, or I'll call again."

"Better call again—and call as often as you please. I shall always be glad to see you."

"It does me good to see you. You seem to know how to take me. Sorry Job is not built the same way."

She laughed and said:

"Job wants to join the Nine now."

"The deuce he does!"

"Yes, or get up another Nine."

Dell laughed. The mill men were beaten and ready to surrender.

"We can't take in any more members now," he said. "We have elected Mr. Curran business manager, and I have just been to his home to see him about it."

"Did you see Gussie?"

"No."

"Did you ask for her?"

"No."

"Won't she be slighted?"

"Guess not. I am a poor mill boy, you know."

"But you have a man's heart and a man's love of beautiful girls."

"So I have, and the most beautiful girl in Ninevah is going to Buffalo with me."

CHAPTER IX.

OFF FOR BUFFALO.

The next day after the two challenges reached Ninevah, one came from Albany, and a day later one from Cincinnati. The little town was all agog over the fame the boys had won for it. Curran decided to act as business manager for them, and at once opened correspondence with the challenging parties.

In the meantime the boys were hard at work on the diamond. Dell knew the weak points of each player and went to work to strengthen them.

"Leave nothing to chance," he said. "Win by hard work and don't trust to luck for anything."

"I'll hoodoo 'em," said Tim, and the boys laughed.

"Have all the fun you want, but do your best to win, or you'll hoodoo the whole Nine some day."

That afternoon being Saturday, quite a crowd of young people came out to see them practice. A half dozen carriages drove up with ladies in them. The mill girls were there, laughing and chatting merrily. A small boy ran up to Tim Dempsey and said a lady in a carriage wanted to see him.

"Well, tell her to look at me," he laughed. The boy grinned, and said she wanted him to come to the carriage.

"Oh, yes—which one?"

The boy pointed toward the carriage, and Tim saw a lady wave her fan at him. He ran over there, and found Fannie Mayes and Gussie Curran in the carriage.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, on recognizing them. "I didn't know who you were, or I'd have flown to you."

"Tim, I have that dreadful headache again," said Fannie, with a look of pain in her face. "Won't you please hoodoo it and drive it away—that's a good boy!"

"Holy mackerell! Do you take me really for a hoodoo, Miss Fannie!" and he gave her a look of honest astonishment.

"I don't know, Tim, but I do know that you relieved me the other night on the train."

"Lord bless the girl! I was only fooling."

"But you did relieve me, Tim," she pleaded.

"Maybe it was the dirt I left on your face."

"Oh, do please don't make fun of me. My head aches dreadfully. Get in here and cure it for me," and she opened the carriage door for him. He got in, she took off her hat, and he rubbed her forehead and temples with both hands for five minutes, doing a little monkey business that set Gussie to laughing.

"You may laugh as much as you please, dear," said Fannie, "but the ache is gone!"

"What are you giving me, Miss Fannie!" laughed Tim.

"Have you got the pain in your heart again, Tim?" Gussie asked.

"Throo for you, Miss Gussie," and he raised Fannie's hand to his lips and kissed it. "It's my heart that has the headache."

"Tim—you have driven it away!" said Fannie. "I am not joking. What is it? What powers have you? I wish I knew."

"Fannie, are you telling the truth?" Gussie exclaimed.

"Yes—every bit of pain is gone. Oh, isn't it wonderful! Tim, is it the hoodoo?"

"Niver a wan of me knows," he laughed, wondering if she was making fun of him. "But I'll cure you no more unless you pay me with a smack of your mouth!"

"Oh, I'd rather kiss you than have one of those dreadful headaches," she replied. "Mother suffers with them, too. I'll tell her about it."

"Bedad, but I draw the line at kissing your mother."

The girls screamed with laughter, during which time Tim got out and hurried back to the field. He was very much puzzled over the incident. He little dreamed that he was one of those whose systems are surcharged with electricity. It was the electricity that cured the headache. He didn't know it then, and didn't find it out for months afterwards.

The day for the game at Buffalo came round, and half the town was at the station to see them off. Gussie Curran went along in charge of her father. Daisy Miller could not leave her mother, so Dell had only Bettie Cassels to look after. Tom Gillette had Jennie Babcock with him. All the others had a girl except Phil Durham. He had his mother—a handsome widow of forty, who was on the lookout for a second husband. He was attentive to her as though she was a young girl and his sweetheart. It was the happiest party of young people that ever entered Buffalo.

A great crowd met them at the station. A band of music was there to escort them to the ball ground, and carriages conveyed them through the streets.

"Oh, but this is no hoodoo!" exclaimed Tim, who had pretty Dolly Boyden by his side. "Faith an' we'll all be president yet."

At the ball ground an immense crowd rose up and cheered them as they entered the enclosure. Seats on the grand-stand were reserved for the ladies of the party, and they were promptly escorted to them.

"Tim! Tim! Tim Dempsey!" yelled a thousand voices. "Which is the little hoodoo?"

"For the love of heaven, don't tell 'em!" said Tim.

But parties were there who saw the game at Rochester, and so it was soon known which was the jig dancer of the Nine. All sorts of comments were flung at him, questions asked and funny things said.

Tim was rattled for a few minutes, and didn't say a word, to the great amusement of the rest of the Nine.

The two nines shook hands and seemed pleased with each other, after which the game was called. The Nine of Ninevah went to the bat, with Gillette handling it. The pitcher of the home team was an expert—one of the famous ones of the great League. Tom let two balls pass him. He was not sure of them. But the third one was sent bounding to centerfield.

He stopped at first, and Si took up the bat. He took his time about using it, for he let two balls pass him. The third one he smashed to left center, and Tom dashed for second, leaving Si at first.

Phil Durham next took the bat, and the first ball that came he sent skyward. Every face was turned up to gaze at it.

It was a hard blow. Gillette sprinted for all he was worth and passed over the plate just as the ball landed in the hands of the left center. But it slipped from him, and quick as a flash Si sprang for home. He got there on a tremendous slide.

The crowd yelled like Indians.

The captain of the home team ran up to the umpire and was seen gesticulating wildly, though no one could hear what he was saying.

CHAPTER X.

BETTIE CASSELS CROWNS THE BOYS.

The crowd waited to hear what the umpire and the home team captain were talking about. That the captain was excited and angry was evident to all, and it was plain that the umpire was not agreeing with him on the subject they were discussing.

Dell waited for the crowd to be quiet, and then he found out that the left center had caught the ball all right—so the captain claimed—and afterwards let it fall from his grasp.

"He should have held onto it," the umpire said.

"But how long must one hold onto it?" the angry captain demanded.

"Till the umpire is satisfied that he caught it," was the reply.

"That's good law!" sung out Tom, "and I ain't much of a lawyer, either!"

The crowd laughed, and the umpire called out:

"Play ball!"

The Ninevahs made no more runs in that inning, and went to the field with two to their credit.

As soon as Dell was in the box, Tim called out:

"Dell, alana, that pitcher trated us mane wid his curves. Moind yer twists now, and make his hid shwim bating the air."

Dell laughed, and sent the Buffalo a twister that caused him to saw the air.

"Arrah, me darlint," cried Tim, "make the gossoon ate more av 'em!"

Dell sent him another and again he missed.

"Would yez all look at 'im! Hould up the ball, Dell, alana, till I hoodoo it!" and Dell held it, laughing the while. Tim made a funnel of both hands over his mouth and rolled out some outlandish jargon that sent the women and boys into convulsions of merriment. Then Dell sent it whizzing at the batsman, who thrashed the air as if fighting hornets.

Tim wheeled all round, with his hand on his heart, and bowed to the audience on the grand-stand with the dignity of a circus rider who had just jumped through a hoop. The disgusted batsman dropped the willow and retired.

"Hoodooed!" yelled a small boy in the crowd, and the laugh was on the batsman.

The next man missed the first ball and Gillette got it.

"Kape yer eyes on 'im, Dell, dear. He's the Buffalo knot."

He happened to be the smallest man in the home team, and the crowd yelled with merriment. He never got rid of that nickname. But he hit the second ball, only to be caught out by Phil Durham.

Again Tim made a professional bow to the grand-stand, to the infinite amusement of the ladies.

The third man at the bat was an athlete—a splendid specimen of physical manhood—who was much admired by the ladies on the grand-stand.

"Hivin help us!" ejaculated Tim. "Av he hits the ball he'll kil it sure!" and the big fellow himself laughed. He smashed the ball high in the air, and sailed it over Tim's head.

"Good-by, friends!" cried Tim. "It's dead I am, sure!"

It came down into his hands with a thud that was heard by everyone on the grounds. Tim fell flat on his back, and lay like a dead man, holding the ball straight up in his right hand. The home Nine failed to make even one base in the inning. But the cheering was followed by boisterous laughter, when two of the Ninevahs went to Tim, took him up by the head and heels, and bore him to the home plate. He maintained the rigidity of an iron rail all the way, with the ball in his hand. They laid him on the plate, where he sung out:

"Put silver handles on me coffin, byes!"

"Blast 'em!" said the home team manager. "They're having fun with us all the way through!"

"Hooray for der hoodoo!" yelled a small boy in the crowd.

The Buffaloes were amazed as well as mad, and they

played as never before in their lives. They were on the watch now, and the inning ended with no run for the Ninevachs.

"Be the powers!" cried Tim, as he went to the field again, "av yer don't be afther letting us run we'll do thot same for the likes av yez."

Dell put out one in the next inning, and the next one was put to sleep at second base. The third was caught out by Gray.

No runs.

Up to the eighth inning the score stood two for the Ninevachs and none for the Buffaloes. In that inning they made two runs, and went to the field with an even score with the visitors. Such a close game had never been played in Buffalo and the excitement rose to fever heat.

"Even money on either side!" yelled a well known sporting man, with a big roll of money in his hand.

"For the love av hivin will somebody lind me a thousand!" cried Tom, looking toward the grand-stand. "I'll hoodoo the game and win sure."

"Will you divide if you win?" called out a man on the stand.

"That I will."

"Here's the money."

"Here's another thousand on the same terms," cried another.

"Put it up! We'll have Buffalo meat for supper sure!"

Amid tremendous cheering the money was put up, the sporting man taking both bets, backing the home team himself. Never did excitement run so high at a ball game. Hundreds of bets were made on that last inning ere the Nine of Ninevah went to the bat.

Tim took the ball, dropped it into his cap, and buried his face down in it for a minute or two, and then poured it out on the ground—got down on his knees and blew on it for another minute. Then he laid down and wallowed on it.

"That's all right, byes!" he cried, as he rose to his feet. "We'll win sure, but hivin help the one as doesn't do his level best."

The crowd laughed and Si Sturdivant took up the bat.

"Make 'em all hot grounders, boys," ordered Dell.

Si sent out a grounder with tremendous force, but did not go beyond first base. Phil sent out another that moved Si to second. He stopped at first. Peter Boyden took up the willow and missed twice. But the third one went bounding out to centerfield, moving Si up to third. Phil to second, and he got to first. Then Jack Haralson gave the ball a smash, after missing one, that brought Si home amid tremendous cheering. George Gray was caught out. Phil was put to sleep at third. Then Tim took up the willow and bowed to it, kissed it, hugged it, took off his cap and bowed almost to the ground before it, the crowd roaring with laughter. Then he looked defiantly at the pitcher, saying:

"Let her go, you gossoon!"

He smashed out a hot grounder that brought Pete Boyden over the plate on a slide. The crowd stood up and yelled like lunatics. Tim himself stopped at first. He might have reached second had he known it. But he didn't. As it was, two runs had been made, and that was the best they could do. They went to the field with two ahead of the Buffaloes on the blackboard. The latter went to the bat, knowing they had to make three runs to win. They made but one, and came very close to another, but missed.

The Nine of Ninevah won.

"The best played game and the closest I ever saw!" cried the umpire.

The crowd rose up and yelled for five minutes. Their home team had been beaten, but they had enjoyed the game and laughed so much they did not regret it.

Tim immediately began his jig dance. The din was so great that his call for a partner could not be heard. But there was a score of Irish lasses present, who had come prepared to jig it with him. They ran in, and the jubilee began. It was the grand climax of the game. The police had to push back the crowd so the people could see it. When it was over a great, strong-lunged son of Erin sung out:

"It's a great day for Ireland!"

"And a bigger one for Ninevah!" cried a girlish voice on the grand-stand.

Bettie Cassels stood up with a big wreath of flowers in her hand. Eight other Ninevah girls rose with her, each with a wreath in her hand. The crowd cheered them. Bettie beckoned to Dell, and he went forward. She dropped the wreath over his head. Then she beckoned to the others, and they ran forward to be crowned in quick succession, each by

the girl who had come with him. The cheering was like the roar of Old Ocean.

The captain of the home team shook Dell's hand, but the din was so great not a word could be heard by anybody.

"Speech! Speech!" yelled a thousand voices, and the uproar continued for several minutes.

"You will have to speak to them," said the home team captain to Dell.

"I'll thank them, but can't make a speech," he replied, and then he waved his hand for silence. A hush fell upon the great crowd.

"Friends!" he cried, in a clear, ringing tone. "We have to-day met the best Nine, the most generous people, and more beautiful ladies than we ever can hope to see again at a game of ball. The Nine of Ninevah can never forget the day they came to Buffalo, and as long as they live they will remember it with feelings of gratitude in their hearts. In their name I thank you for your generous reception of us this day."

He bowed, and the cheering broke forth anew. It was a neat little speech that pleased everyone who heard it.

"Short and sweet!" exclaimed a young lady on the grand-stand. "I am sorry he did not say more. He has such a fine voice!"

Then the home team captain spoke a few sentences, acknowledging a square defeat.

"But what could we expect when they hoodooed the ball!"

How the crowd yelled and laughed.

Nobody believed in the hoodoo, but the fun was in it and that was all they cared for. They never had so much of it at a ball game before, and so they did not grieve over the defeat of the home team—save those who had lost money on the result.

CHAPTER XI.

DELL AND BETTIE.

When the boys from Ninevah were ready to return home, they found that they could not settle up money matters in time to catch the train that connected with the road to Ninevah. They asked Mr. Curran what they should do, and he said:

"Stop over till to-morrow. All go to one hotel. I'll go with you and see that the girls are provided for. I'll also telegraph home that we shall not return till to-morrow."

Some of the girls felt like crying, as they had come with the expectation of returning home by midnight. But those who had brothers in the Nine were happy, and soon made the others so. They went to a hotel and had the entire house at their disposal. Music was sent for and a dance followed.

Tim Dempsey was the jolliest one of the party, for he had won \$1,000 on the game. Hundreds came to the hotel to see him and inquire about that hoodoo business. He made fun all the time for the party. The girl he had with him had a high old time, as he spent money freely for her entertainment.

Dell asked Bettie Cassels about those wreaths, and she confessed that she had ordered them by messenger from the grand-stand.

"I wanted to show the crowd that the Ninevah girls backed up the Ninevah Nine," she said.

"And paid about ten or fifteen dollars to do it," said Dell.

"Well, it was my money," she retorted.

"Well, now, see here," he said. "You are a sensible girl who can understand a fellow. I want to pay that money back."

"Oh, no!"

"But I will. You worked for your money. I play for mine and make ten dollars where you make ten cents. You must take every penny back, or I won't believe you are my best friend."

"I know I am the best friend you have in Ninevah, Sidney, and will let you have your way about it. The girls couldn't spare the money, so I didn't ask one of them to help me. They would have been willing to do so, though."

Dell gave her the money and thanked her for her thoughtfulness in doing what she did.

During the evening Gussie Curran said to him:

"Mr. Dell, that was a neat little speech you made to the audience, and I heard a number of ladies say they were sorry you did not say more."

"Thank you," he said, laughing. "I would rather have them say that than have them complain of my talking too much."

"Father said it was neat and to the point, and that you had a good deal of horse sense."

They both laughed.

"Well," he said, "I hope you and your father will always have a good opinion of me. I shall certainly strive to deserve it."

"Oh, my opinion is the same as his," she laughed. "Where did you learn to dance, Mr. Dell?"

"Oh, I picked up the steps as I grew up," said he.

"I never saw one dance so well. If you would open a dancing school I'd be one of your pupils."

"A dancing school wouldn't pay in Ninevah. Everyone there can dance already."

"Yes—in a way," she laughed.

Dell noticed that she was rather reserved with the other girls from Ninevah, and did not ask her to dance. He knew that she would not like to have it said in Ninevah that she danced with the mill girls in Buffalo.

They all retired at midnight, and were up at eight o'clock the next morning. The girls were to go home and the Nine to take the train for Cleveland. Each girl received a handsome present and a cheer as the train moved out.

The people of Ninevah were in great good humor over the victory at Buffalo. The boys got about five hundred and fifty dollars each in gate money. Tim Dempsey got one thousand dollars from the two men who bet for him. The whole town rejoiced in his good fortune, and his mother shook hands with half the population over it.

But Tim asked Mr. Curran to hold on to his money for him, as he intended to keep that for himself, the gate money to go to his mother. Mr. Curran asked him what he intended to do with it.

Use it where it will do the most good," he replied.

"Very definite, indeed," said the manager, with a laugh.

"Well, that's all I know myself just now," said Tim.

"Very good, then," laughed Curran.

Tim was a thousand ahead of the others in the Nine, and he put on a great deal of dignity sometimes, at which the others laughed heartily.

They took the evening train for Cleveland, where, on account of the great game at Buffalo, a big crowd of lovers of the sport met them at the station. They called loudly for Dell and Dempsey. They were soon pointed out to them, and the two had to shake hands for an hour at the hotel.

Suddenly George Gray came to Dell and took him aside.

"I've seen Zach Childs," he whispered to him.

"Where?"

"Here in this crowd."

"When?"

"Not five minutes ago."

"Speak to him?"

"No. He is in disguise, but I recollected a scar on the back of his right hand, and knew it as soon as I saw it."

"The deuce! I remember that scar, too," said Dell. "It was caused by a cut with a knife."

"Yes. He is dressed in a checked gray woolen suit. Just look at the hand when you see a young man in that sort of clothes."

Then they parted, as many wanted to see the famous pitcher who had beaten two League Nines with his boys from a little country town. Dell was talking to a party of them when he caught a glimpse of the youth with the gray check woolen suit. He looked at his right hand and saw the scar on the back of it.

He recognized it at once. It was Zach Childs whom he had knocked down in the mill at Ninevah the first day he went to work there. He also believed him to be the one whom he had given a load of bird shot to.

He noticed Childs eying him with a savage glint in his eyes.

Suddenly he turned round, faced him and said:

"Hello, Childs! I didn't expect to meet you here!"

Childs started as if stung, and stammered out:

"My—er—name is Jones."

"Jones nothing! You are Zach Childs, from Ninevah, between two suns!"

Zach sprang at him with the agility of a tiger, aiming a blow at his face. Dell parried the blow, but ere he could return it, Zach dashed through the crowd and disappeared out into the street.

Instantly there was a great excitement in the hotel. Someone had attacked the pitcher of the Nine of Ninevah and fled. The boys soon heard of it, and rushed to Dell's side.

"Who was he?" Phil asked.

"Zach Childs!"

"Thunder! Where is he?" and he wheeled round in search of him.

"He is gone," said someone.

"He is wanted in Ninevah," said Phil. "The sheriff would like to see him and entertain him in the jail."

"Did you know him, Dell?" Gray asked, as he rejoined Dell.

"Yes, and asked him what he was doing here. He said his name was Jones, and tried to land his fist in my face, but I parried it. He took to his heels, like the coward that he is."

"I'll telegraph to Ninevah to see if he is wanted," said Gray, starting to go out.

"No, George," said Dell. "For his mother's sake let him go!"

"Yes, let him go," said Phil. "She has enough to bear without having any more."

CHAPTER XII.

ZACH CHILDS AGAIN IN CLEVELAND.

The meeting with Zach Childs in the crowd at the hotel in Cleveland caused a good deal of excitement among the Ninevah boys. They talked about it among themselves, but the Cleveland people knew nothing about the merits of the case.

Jack Haralson told a reporter all about it, and the next morning the whole story was in print. A detective, anxious to get a reward, at once telegraphed to Ninevah to know if Childs was wanted there.

The constable telegraphed back that no warrant had been issued nor any reward offered for his arrest. That was all the detective wanted to know, and so he let it drop.

In the meantime the Cleveland sporting men were eagerly hunting for chances to place money on the game. The Cleveland nine had twice beaten the Buffalo team, and by good scores. That fact gave the Cleveland sports good hopes of beating the boys. They had to give odds of two to one in order to find takers. At such odds Sidney Dell and Tom Gillette put up five hundred dollars each on the game, and Tim put up the one thousand dollars he had won at Buffalo. None of the other boys would risk more than one hundred dollars.

By some means Zach Childs heard that he was not wanted at home, and so he came to the hotel, accompanied by two stalwart young toughs. He was well dressed, and had evidently bettered his condition financially since leaving Ninevah. He was not in any disguise this time.

The first of the Nine who saw him was Tim Dempsey.

"Hello, Tim!" he called.

Tim looked hard at him for a few moments and then turned away without speaking to him. He looked savage, but said nothing till he ran up against Si Sturdivant, the young blacksmith.

"Hello, Si! Where's Dell?" he asked.

"Up-stairs, I guess. Living here now?"

"Yes—got a good job here," was the reply. "You fellows have been having good luck since I left Ninevah."

"Yes, you had good luck, too, in getting away as you did."

"How? I don't understand you," and Zach bristled up.

"Who picked the bird shot out of you, or have you got 'em yet?"

"Bird shot? What in thunder do you mean, Si Sturdivant?"

"Haven't you read the papers this morning? That's a nice story about you."

"Yes, I read it, and am here to find out who told that lie to the reporter."

Si laughed.

"Did you tell it?" Zach asked.

"No, but let me tell you how to clear yourself, Zach. Everybody in Ninevah believes you were one of the two men who got a load of bird shot on the night you left there. There are ten of us here now—including Mr. Curran. Just come up to my room and draw your shirt. If we can't find any bird shot in your hide we'll publish a card saying you are innocent, and thus clear you from the terrible charge."

"I'll do that when I lick the one who told the lie on me," said Zach.

"Better do that first and lick him afterwards. Then nobody will blame you. Licking the whole Nine won't do you any good."

"I'll see about that. I intend to ask everyone of them till I get the one who told it."

"Well, I'll call 'em all down and let you ask them."

Three were in sight. He called them and sent for the others. In five minutes they were all there. Zach was cornered. It was the very thing he did not want. He had

called to play a game of bluff with his two young tough friends, but did not dream of facing the whole team.

"Boys," said Si, "Zach wants to lick the one who told the reporter the story of his attempt at robbery in Ninevah, and of his getting a load of bird shot for his pains. I suggested to him to go up to my room, draw his shirt, and show his hide to us. If we found no bird shot we would publish a card declaring him innocent. He refuses and wants to find out who told the story on him."

"I told it," said Jack Haralson, "and I'll bet one hundred dollars to one cent that I can find one hundred bird shot in your hide, or places where somebody else picked 'em out for you. Do you dare take the bet?"

Jack was a game youth and a match for Zach. His very boldness staggered him.

"I didn't come here to bet with anybody," said Zach. "All I wanted was to find out who told the lie."

"Don't care a cent about clearing yourself, eh?" said Jack.

"Not with such as you," sneered Zach.

"That is the refuge of a thief," said Jack. "I brand you here and now as a thief who escaped after being filled with bird shot."

Zach sprang at him like a tiger. He had to do it, though he knew the Nine would not let his two friends aid him. Haralson was on his guard, expecting it, and met him with a staggering blow in the face. Instantly the Nine formed a ring and let them have room. But there was a crowd in the hotel, and the employees interfered and put Zach out, both eyes blackened and nose bleeding. The two young toughs did not dare say anything.

The incident caused a crowd to gather in the hotel that remained till the time came for the boys to go to the ball grounds.

They went out in three carriages and found an immense concourse of people in the inclosure.

"Whew!" said Tim, as he looked around at the sea of faces. "If we beat 'em we'll be rich."

"Yes," said Curran, laughing, "but you have run up against a crack team now."

"Oh, we'll crack 'em," said Tim. "I'll put me hoodoo on 'em."

"We must go round the field with the home team," said Dell. "Come on!" and he led the way with a bat over his shoulder. The crowd cheered and roared as they followed the band of music. Tim bowed repeatedly, as if taking the demonstration all to himself.

"That's the little hoodoo!" cried someone in the crowd.

"Yes—that's the jigger! Hi, Tim! Are ye there?" cried another.

"Faith an' I am!" Tim answered.

"Howly mither av Moses!" cried an Irish voice. "Is that bantam the banshee?"

"Hist!" replied Tim. "Would yez give it away? Hould yer lip an' see me do 'em!"

The crowd yelled. The fun began ahead of the game. Nearly every yell was on Tim. Many young ladies were gazing at Sidney Dell, as he never looked better than on that day.

The umpire called the game, and the visitors went to the bat.

Si was the first to take it up.

He missed two balls.

The home team pitcher was one of the famous ones of the league.

Si was puzzled. They were curves unlike any he had ever seen before, but he didn't say a word. When the third one came, he struck at it gamely and missed.

"Och, murther!" yelled Tim, and a laugh went all round the vast audience.

Si dropped the bat, and Tom Gillette took it up. He, too, thrashed the air twice. Tim sprang up from the bench, and stood a little distance behind the catcher to watch the course of the ball. It landed in the catcher's hands the third time, and Tom was out.

"Murther!" wailed Tim, and the laughter broke out again. Phil Durham missed three times and went out, followed by a wall from Tim that sent the crowd into convulsions.

"Five to one on the home team!" yelled a big sport on the grand-stand, as the Ninevah boys went to the field.

"Mr. Curran," sung out Tim, "cover that with my \$500!"

"All right, my boy!"

"Whoop! The bye is game, onyhow," cried an Irishman.

Dell went into the box and every eye was on him, for the crowd had heard that he was a wonder. He sent a ball at the batsman that Gillette got. The second one went the same

way, and the crowd began to laugh. When Tom got the third one, Tim wailed out:

"Oh, murther!" and the laughter became a roar, in which even the home team and umpire joined.

The second man shared the same fate, and again Tim's wail convulsed the crowd. It was a battle of the pitchers and it looked as if the honors would be even. The third man missed twice and the crowd held their breath as Dell faced him with the ball in his hand. Every member of both nines was on his feet like statues, gazing at the pitcher and the batsman. One could almost hear their hard breathing as they watched. Dell himself stood erect and rigid; but suddenly he sent the ball with a quickness that startled even the batsman.

CHAPTER XIII.

TIM MAKES A BIG HAUL.

The suddenness of the throw startled everyone in the vast crowd.

The batsman struck at it, though, and sawed the air.

"Och, murther!" wailed Tim, and when the cheering ceased he sung out:

"Who said 5 to 1?" and held his hand against the back of his ear in a listening attitude.

Again the crowd yelled. They liked his pluck and humor.

Such a score had probably never been seen on the diamond, where two Nines failed to make a base or even hit the ball in an inning.

In the second inning Si Sturdivant took up the bat and said: "Let's try it over again. Maybe I am onto your curves now."

"There you are," said the pitcher, sending him one of his best.

Si thrashed the air.

Tim ran up to him and made some rapid passes over the bat with both hands, and then did the same before Si's face, the audience roaring the while.

"Out of the way there!"

Tim ran out of the way and Si smashed out a hot grounder and dashed for first base.

"Hoodoo! Hoodoo!" roared the small boys, who were there a thousand strong.

The Cleveland team moved like lightning, and Si dared not try to get to second. Phil Durham hit the first ball and easily got to first, while Si moved to second.

"Hoodooed, hoodooed!" yelled the small boys again.

"Oh, we've got onto your curves, sonny!" sung out Tim, as he took up the bat.

"Glad you have," returned the pitcher. "Let's see you hit this one," and he sent him one with an extra curve to it. Tim smashed it way out to the left fielder, who sprang high up to catch it. But he barely touched it, and it got away from him. Quick as a flash Si broke for home and slid across the plate just in time to be safe. Phil rested at third, and Tim stopped at second, to bow and smile at the cheering crowd, with a great deal of comical dignity.

"Who said 5 to 1?" he yelled at the man on the grand-stand, with whom he had made a bet at those odds. The crowd yelled again at the expense of the sporting man.

Pete Boyden was next at the bat. He missed twice, and then knocked the ball skyward. As it came down toward the open palms of the center fielder, Tim wailed:

"Oh, wirra—wirra!" with such a plaintive tone of voice as to send the Irish element into convulsions.

Jack Haralson was also caught out and Tim cried "Murther!" with frantic energy, keeping up the merriment.

George Gray missed two balls and Tim sung out:

"Georgie, alana, hould up the bat!"

George held it up, and Tim went through the motion of batting the ball, to the great delight of the small boys, and the women and girls.

"Go ahead!" he cried.

George smashed out a hot grounder and dashed for first. Phil crossed the plate, and Tim stopped at second. There he again asked:

"Who said 5 to 1, eh?"

"Do you want to double it?" the sport sung out to him.

"Faith, I do that!" he replied, "but I haven't the scads!"

"Then shut up, will you?"

Just then Will Babcock was caught out, and the Nine had to retire.

"Will somebody lend me a thousand to bluff him wid?" Tim asked, looking up at the grand-stand.

There was a great laugh, but no one offered to lend the money.

Dell went into the box again with every eye in the crowd on him.

"Dell, alana, remember yer wife and kid at home. We must bate 'em!"

My, but the crowd yelled, and Dell himself roared.

"Oh, is he married?" was heard from hundreds of women and girls.

"Got ten wives," said Tim, and a scream of laughter greeted the statement. Dell threw the ball and put such a twist to it that the catcher had to grab it.

"Good-by!" cried Tim; "sure, an' av we bate 'em it's a dance we'll have!"

"Hoodoo 'im!" yelled a small boy in the crowd.

"Faith, an' it's hoodooed already he is!" answered Tim, as he saw the second miss. "Be careful wid yer curves an' twists, alana! It's getting mad he is. Would yer look at ther grane in his eye!"

The laughter was so great that many did not see the third miss. Not until he threw down the bat in disgust did they know that he was out.

The next man smashed the first ball and got to first base.

Tim pretended to be very much astonished, and asked:

"How did you do it, sonny?"

"With me legs, you hoodoo!" was the reply.

"Faith, an' they're no good! Yez can't get home on 'em!" and he didn't. He was put to sleep at second.

"Go shwap yer legs!" suggested Tim, and the fellow himself had to laugh. The little fellow was bubbling over with wit and humor.

The home team made one run during the inning, so the score stood two to one for the visitors.

"Who said 5 to 1?" yelled Tim, as he went back from the field.

"You did!" retorted the sport. "You keep on saying it. Put up or shut up, will you?"

"Come off! You're going to have a wake at your house to-morrow night."

"You'll be the corpse if I do."

"Niver a wan! I'll be counting me money, five to one!" and screams of laughter greeted the retort.

Si Sturdivant again took up the bat and faced the famous league pitcher. He had caught onto the peculiarity of his pitching and hit the ball a tremendous whack. It was quick work, but Si was the best batter in the Ninevah Nine. He sent the ball skyward without intending to do so, and went speeding round the field at his best gait. Every face was upturned to see how high the ball would go. Exclamations of wonder were heard on all sides, when someone sung out:

"Tim is hoodooing it!"

Every eye was turned on Tim.

He was lying flat on his back and pointing both big toes at the ball as it came down. Everybody expected the ball to be caught as it descended. But Tim moved his feet with the descent of the ball till it was close to the center fielder, who was waiting for it. The wind veered it somewhat and the fellow had to shift his position. In doing so he faced the sun, broke a finger, and lost the ball.

Quick as a flash Si slid across the plate amid a roar of cheers.

Tim sprang to his feet and bowed, with his hand on his heart, kissing his hand at the ladies and otherwise taking all the applause to himself.

But when he saw that the center fielder of the home team had a broken finger, he very promptly tendered his sympathy.

"I am sorry you are hurt," he said. "Would prefer that you had caught the ball."

"Such things happen, you know," said the other. "I am sorry, too, and thank you for your sympathy."

Another man was put into his place, and the game went on. The Ninevahs made no more runs during that inning, but went to the field with three runs to their credit and one to the home team.

The home team made one more run in the next inning, and after that they held each other down to that score, till the beginning of the ninth inning. The excitement was intense among the spectators. They had never seen such work on the diamond before.

The Ninevahs did their best in the last inning, only to see one man put to sleep on third base and two at second—none able to get home.

They had to go to the field on that score, and when the

home team went to the bat for the last trial, they received an ovation.

Dell put in some of the best balls of his life. Still many of them were hit. Twice the home team had a man at third ready to dash over the plate, but each time he died within a few feet of it. The last man was caught out, and the game ended—the closest ever played in Cleveland—and the Nine of Ninevah had won, with nearly eight thousand dollars of gate money in sight.

"Whoop!" yelled Tim. "Who said five to one? Whoop!" and he began his jigging.

The vast crowd looked on and laughed till it ended.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NINE AND THE LITTLE DAISY.

Like the game at Buffalo, the Cleveland game was stubbornly fought to the finish. The umpire declared it the best played game he ever umpired. He said he never saw a more pleased crowd at any game in his life.

The Ninevah boys hugged each other in their joy, and Mr. Curran shook hands with each of them as soon as he could get to them.

"I tell you, boys," he exclaimed, "it was worth coming a thousand miles to see it! You have beaten the crack team of the League."

"Oh, we can beat the League any day," laughed Dell.

"They are going to demand another game," Curran said.

"All right! Make it day after to-morrow, and we'll do 'em up again!"

They returned to the hotel in the carriages that took them to the grounds, followed by a thousand boys who believed implicitly in Tim Dempsey's hoodoo powers. With them he was the lion of the day. They blocked the street in front of the hotel and called for him. The police tried in vain to make them go away, and Tim had to appear at a window of the second story and talk to them.

"I am one of you, boys," he said, "and when I play ball I just say to the old folks, who think they know it, 'just see me do it now.' You see a boy knows how to do some things as well as the old man does."

"You bet!" yelled a little ten-year-old chap, and all laughed and cheered.

"Let me give you a pointer, boys. If ever you have anything to do try to do it well. Whenever mother tells you to do anything for her, see to it that you do it quickly and do it rightly. When mother is satisfied with you, you have beaten the hoodoo clear out of sight. That is the best thing a boy can do. The thing for you to do now is to run home and tell mother about the game and the good time you had. Then help her about the house, go to bed, and the next day earn a quarter with which to pay your way in to see the next game. Skip now, every mother's son of you!"

The boys fairly screamed with laughter and baseball enthusiasm. But they dispersed in good order, and soon there were but few of them to be seen on the block.

"That's the best speech I've heard in a month of Sundays," said one of the policemen, when he saw the boys going home.

"Sure, an' the bye hoodooed 'em," said a brother officer.

"It looks that way," laughed the other.

The boys went up to their rooms, bathed and put on their business suits, came down to supper and were then ready to go out to a theatre. Curran had remained with the treasurer of the ball ground association to settle with him about the gate receipts. Each member got about \$800 for his share. Tim had won \$3,500, including the 5 to 1 bluff of the enthusiastic sport on the grandstand, leaving him in cash about \$6,000. He was ahead of any other member of the team financially.

Gussie Curran was at the same hotel with her father, and had now become a real baseball crank. She met the boys in the parlor and congratulated them on their success. She played and sang for them. Dell and Gillette had good voices and both sang with her. She was away from home and her fashionable friends, and did not fear to be with the mill hands. She asked Tim what he intended to do with his money.

"Take care of mother with it," he replied very promptly.

"Good bye!" exclaimed George Gray, imitating Tim's brogue.

"I suppose you'll be getting married some day?" she said.

"Yes, if the right girl comes along," he laughed.

"But if you fail to get the right one?" she asked. "What then?"

"Hoodoo her and make her do right," he laughed.

They all went to the theatre in a body and had a good time.

The next day the papers had wonderful accounts of the game, with announcements of another the following day. By ten o'clock challenges began to come in from League teams all over the country, till at least a dozen were booked.

"Your fortunes are made, boys," said Mr. Curran, "if you win all these games. They will average \$500 for each of you. Play to win every time. The League tackles you now."

"We'll beat 'em," laughed Dell.

"A dispatch for Mr. Dell," said a messenger, looking around for the captain of the Ninevah Nine.

"That's my name," said Dell, taking the message and signing his name on the delivery book. Tearing it open, he read to himself:

"Congratulations. Hope you may win every game. Ninevah rejoices. Bettie."

He folded it up and put it into his pocket.

"Who is it from?" Jack Haralson asked.

"A friend," he replied.

"Who is she?" Si asked.

"Don't ask so many questions," he replied with a smile.

"Oh, I have one of that kind, too," said Si, drawing it from his pocket. But he did not let any one see the name of the sender. It was from pretty Polly Gray and it read almost like Bettie's to Dell.

"Guess I'll get one soon from my old girls," said Will Babcock, "asking for money. Mother never forgets her boy."

The boys laughed, and the merriment had not ceased ere the messenger came with two for him.

"Two, eh? Well, maybe I have two girls on a string. I'll see who they are," and he tore one open and read it, first to himself, and then to the boys:

"Congratulate all the boys for me, Jennie."

"Good for Jennie!" exclaimed Tom.

"Who is the other from?" Pete Boyden asked.

Will tore it open and read it:

"Send your money home to Mother."

"Whoop!" and they roared. Will as loud as any of them.

"Send her some money, Will," said Dell. "She is a good mother."

"You bet she is," assented Will. "I'll send her \$500 and \$100 to sis."

"Right; she is a good sister."

"See here, boys," said Dell, "let's all chip in and send Daisy Miller one hundred dollars. She is a good girl, who supports a sick mother."

Every fellow put his hand into his pocket, and drew out ten dollars.

"I'll put in twenty," said Dell, "to make it an even hundred. Lord, but it will make her a happy girl."

Dell sent the money by mail. Then he went to the telegraph office and dispatched to her:

"The Nine of Ninevah sends you by mail one hundred dollars with their compliments. Sidney Dell."

That afternoon the Nine took three carriages, and rode over a good deal of the city. It was dark when they came back to the hotel. Gussie Curran met Dell in the ladies' parlor, and said:

"You boys have slighted me."

"How? We did not mean to."

"I am here in a strange city, and nine of you have left me to amuse myself as best I could all day."

"Miss Gussie, no mill boy would dare to presume to offer you any attention. We know how you feel about such things."

He was frank with her.

"But you and Mr. Gillette are mill men no longer."

"None of us are, as for that matter. We'll never work there again. May I have the pleasure of your company to the theatre this evening?"

"No. Father has bought tickets for both of us this evening. But don't forget hereafter," and she laughed very pleasantly as she spoke.

"I won't forget it," he said, and they seemed to be the best of friends after that.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LETTER.

The next day at noon Dell was surprised at receiving a letter from the hotel clerk, who said it had just arrived.

He tore it open and read:

"Daisy has just left me with the dispatch you sent her. She was crying for joy and blessing every member of the Nine of Ninevah. Her mother is doing likewise. I know who is the cause of this good deed, and I am so happy in the thought that you think and feel as I do in such matters. I send, for her mother and herself, the sincerest thanks of their grateful hearts, and pray that you may win every game you play with the League. Ever your friend, Bettie."

Dell never read a letter that gave him so much pleasure.

"She is a splendid girl," he said to himself, "and the most unselfish one I ever met. I won't show her letter, but will tell the boys what she says. She might not like to have everyone see it," and then he read it over again and commented on it.

"She writes a good letter," he mused, "and seems to have a good education. She'd make a fine wife for a good man. Wonder if she'd think me good enough for her?"

He told the boys what she said about Daisy in her letter. Tears came into the eyes of some of them when they heard it.

"Say, boys," said Tom, drawing his sleeve across his eyes, "let's set her up in business! One game will do it. She and her mother could run a little store and make a good living."

"Done!" exclaimed the Nine.

"I'll write and tell Bettie about it," said Dell. "She and Daisy are great friends."

"Bettie is a brick," said Pete Boyden. "I wish she would take a liking to me as she has to you, Dell."

"There is nothing between us," said Dell. "If you make up to her with a good bank account she might smile on you."

"Guess any of them would," laughed George Gray. "We nine have struck it rich and knocked out those mill men."

"But we don't want to do any plunging when we go back," remarked Will Babcock. "Just go along as though we always had plenty of money."

"Good sense, that," laughed Dell. "Going to send the old girl any money, Will?" and he arose and started out. "I am going to write to Bettie about Daisy, and then go to the bank."

Will went with him and sent checks to his mother and sister.

Dell wrote to Bettie and told her what the boys were going to do for little Daisy, and asked her to go and tell her about it, with an injunction of secrecy. Then he expressed the hope of again having the pleasure of her company to some game not too far from Ninevah, saying:

"If I could win the love of a girl like you I think I could be the happiest fellow in the world. You seem to think of others more than yourself, and I know that I think more of you than I do of myself or any one else. We play another game here to-morrow, and then go on to Cincinnati to play the Red Stockings. The League is red hot after us, and the more we beat them the worse they are. I would be so glad to hear from you there."

When the game was called the next day the betting was even. An immense crowd was there—even greater than at the first game. Before a ball was pitched Tim sang out in a clear, ringing voice:

"Who said 5 to 1?"

The crowd laughed, but no such offer was made, and the game began with Ninevah boys at the bat. Si was the first to handle the willow and made a good hit. But he could get only to first base. Phil did equally as well, but Si was put to sleep at second. Pete was caught out on the fly. So was Tom.

"Who says 5 to 1?" yelled Tim.

"Nobody!" sung out a voice in the crowd.

"Make it four to one, then," Tim suggested.

"I ain't bucking ag'in no hoodoo."

Dell went into the box and began some of his best work. The first man missed twice and barely touched the third ball. He got to first and the next man sent him to second. But he never got beyond it. Dell worried them more than on the

first day. He put out two and Phil caught out a third, retiring the Nine.

"Who says 4 to 1?" sung out Tim, as he waltzed back to the bat.

They had four innings ere a run was made, and that was for the home team. They danced for joy, and Tim again called for the 4 to 1 man. Still he was not forthcoming.

In the fifth inning the Ninevahs again failed to make a run, though they had three to fall within a few feet of the home plate. The home team made another run and the crowd rose up and yelled. Then a man sung out:

"Here's your 4 to 1, Tim!"

"Go him 1,000 for me, Mr. Curran," Tim sung out, quick as a flash, and Currant covered it.

"Hanged if he ain't going to hoodoo the game," cried a voice.

"You bet I am!" and the crowd laughed.

"He's game, anyhow," said another.

"Why, the whole thing is a game," Tim retorted.

"No skin game now, Tim!"

"Oh, we'll get your hides!" returned Tim, as Si went to the bat. "We'll tear everyone of 'em, too."

Si missed two balls, when Tim began his antics. He began making passes at the pitcher in a way that evoked roars of laughter. Si smashed out a hot grounder and got to first. Phil sent him to second and Tom to third. Then Dell took up the willow. Tim ran up, seized the bat and tossed it high up in the air, caught it by the handle as it came down, and handed it back to Dell, with a bow so low his forehead almost touched the ground. Then he sung out to the three men on the bases:

"Now every mither's son av yez come home quick—I'm sick!"

"Look out for der hoodoo!" yelled a small boy in the crowd.

Dell smashed out a hot grounder that went bounding straight out to the second base. It passed through the hands of the baseman and went way out to the outfielder. Then the crowd yelled as never before. Si bounded over the home plate, and Phil was but a second or two behind him. The ball came whizzing through the air, but Pete was sliding like an ice-boat and landed safely. Dell stopped at third.

Such yelling was never heard at a game as followed the great play. The entire grand-stand was a mass of waving fans, handkerchiefs and parasols. Tim ran here and there, bowing, smiling and throwing kisses at the ladies. Then he ran up to Dell and hugged him.

Jack took up the bat and was caught out. George shared the same fate.

"Hello!" cried Tim. "Let me have the bat," and he ran to the home plate, took up the willow, looked at the pitcher, and said:

"Now, come on, you gossoon!"

The ball came whizzing at him, and he let it pass to the catcher.

"Get your feet ready Dell, darlint," he said. "Sure, an we're waiting for ye!"

The second passed him, and then he prepared for the third. He hit it hard, and sent it way out to right field. Dell got home easily, amid great cheering. Tim stopped at first base, and sung out:

"Who says 4 to 1?"

The cheering was immense. The home team was rattled. The situation had been reversed in one inning, and they would have to hold down the visitors and make three runs to win.

The Ninevahs made no more runs and went to the field with four to their credit.

In the next inning neither made a run. It was hard work on both sides. When the last inning opened the Ninevahs tried hard to raise the score, but could not. They were held down by the home team, and had to go to the field with what they had.

The home team played as never before, and made two runs amid a cyclone of cheers. Another at third base made a slide for home plate, but Tom got the ball just a quarter of a second too soon for him. He called for judgment, but the umpire ruled that he was out.

There was another man at third ready to make the dash. He was the best sprinter in the team, too, and expectation ran high. The crowd actually held their breath as the ball went to the batsman. Tim forgot his fun-making. He no longer tried to raise a laugh. He had \$3,000 up on the result.

Dell sent such twisters at the batsman as to put him out.

Another took up the willow. Only one more remained behind him. Two were on bases. He smashed the ball high up and the man at third dashed across the plate. But Will

Babcock caught it on the fly and he had to go back. The last man took up the willow.

"It will be a tie!" cried a hoarse voice. "One hundred dollars if you get home, Mack!"

CHAPTER XVI.

DELL HAS AN OFFER.

Never was a great concourse of people ever before held in such suspense as were those at the last ball of the last inning in that second game at Cleveland. Thousands of dollars were at stake, and thousands of people held their breath as they watched Sidney Dell, the pitcher of the Nine of Ninevah, cast the ball.

The batsman sawed the air twice and then came the supreme moment.

"Dell, alana!" cried Tim, "double the twist av ye love me!"

The tension was too great for any one to laugh. No one seemed to hear him. Dell sent the ball and there was an extra twist in it. The batsman thrashed the air and threw down the bat. For a moment not a sound came from the crowd. Then the storm broke loose and the roar was appalling. Tim ran to Dell, grasped his hand and wrung it with all his might. Then he ran out to a clear open and began jigging. The crowd yelled and cheered him. Others joined him, and soon there was a dozen or more at it.

While thousands stayed to see the fun other thousands slowly dispersed, satisfied with having seen the best team of the League beaten by a Nine of boys from a little country village.

The captain of the home team went to Dell and said:

"We had you beaten till you made that three-bagger."

"Yes, so you did," laughed Dell. "That's why I made it."

"But could you do it again?"

"I don't know. I saw a chance for it and took the bat to make the effort."

"Luck was with you. I want you to give us another trial before the season ends."

"I shall be glad to do so, as your people turn out well to see a game."

"Yes. They like a good game and will pay to see one. Dempsey, though, is a good drawing card for the young people."

Dell laughed and said:

"Yes—and there are some people who really believe in the hoodoo."

"They are not all young people either. But we must have another go at you before the season ends."

"You shall have it. We have all been royally treated by your people and would be glad to come here again."

"I am going down to Cincinnati to see the game there," said the home team captain.

"Glad to have you go."

"The captain of the Cincinnati team was here to-day."

"The deuce he was!"

"Yes," and the Cleveland man smiled.

"Well, what did he think of the game?" Dell asked.

"Haven't seen him since the game ended. Their pitcher was here, too."

"Well, I hope they got some points."

"Don't know whether they did or not," laughed the other. "Don't tell them that I told you about it."

"Oh, no, but keep your eyes on the Ninevah boys down there. We are going to fan them beautifully, and don't you forget it."

"You will find that a hard job," laughed the other.

"I don't think so. We have done the hardest job we expect to do this season. Your team is the best in the League, I am told, and we feel elated over our success."

"I can tell you that our boys feel their defeat very keenly."

"Of course; that's natural."

At the hotel Gussie congratulated the boys, shaking hands with each of them, saying:

"Oh, you don't know how proud I am of the Nine of Ninevah! I have written to Fannie Mayes to meet me in Cincinnati. Father says I can go all the route with him."

Just as they were about to go into the supper room a man tapped Dell on the shoulder and said:

"I'd like to see you a few minutes if you can spare the time."

"Can you wait till I have had my supper, sir?" said Dell. "I am ravenously hungry."

"Yes, of course," laughed the man. "I should think you would be, after the hard work of the afternoon."

"It was hard work—and a great game."

"Yes, and a great victory."

Dell went in and sat with Mr. Curran and Gussie. She was extremely agreeable to him.

"Tim wasn't funny much to-day," she remarked to Dell.

"No, much to my surprise. I guess he was scared up to the time we had that great play."

"I know I was," said Mr. Curran. "I thought it was all up with you. I had up \$1,000 even on the game. Little Tim has more nerve than any man I ever met. I thought he was actually throwing away his money when he took that bet of four to one."

"I was uneasy," admitted Dell. "but his confidence braced me up," and he laughed. "He has more money now than any two in the Nine."

"But will he keep it?" Gussie asked.

"Yes, I think so. Tim is mighty level-headed for one of his age. He is going to buy a home for his mother as soon as he gets back to Ninevah."

"Good for Tim!" said Mr. Curran. "The boy who thinks of his mother's comfort is the one to tie to every time."

"Tim is just that sort of a boy," said Dell. "The truth is, everyone is a square chap. Not one is in the least inclined to run wild over his good fortune."

After supper Dell met the man in the office who was waiting for him, saying:

"I am at your service now, sir."

"Come this way, please," and he led the way to a seat in a corner, where they would not be noticed. There he sat down and said:

"I am a baseball man from St. Louis, and want to know if you are open for an offer?"

"What kind of an offer?" Dell asked.

"To pitch for another Nine?"

"No," and he shook his head. "Not as long as our Nine hold together."

"But we can pay you more than you can hope to earn with your Nine."

"I don't know about that. We have beaten everything in sight so far and got the gate money."

"But if you are beaten you get nothing. With us your salary goes on all the year round whether we win or lose. We have plenty of money back of us."

"I think we have a pretty good pile in front of us," replied Dell. "If I should leave our boys they would never forgive me. I organized and trained them. To leave them would be dishonorable. They are all poor boys, four of them supporting widowed mothers. I can't leave them, sir."

The man seemed somewhat surprised and tried to reason it out on the plan of every man for himself. But Dell shook his head and refused. The man finally made him a big offer, telling him to think it over and give him an answer in Cincinnati.

"You have my answer now," Dell said, as he shook hands with him.

"There's a telegram for you at the desk, sir," said one of the bell boys, as Dell started to go up-stairs.

He went to the desk and got it. It was from Bettie Cassels:

"Daisy and I send congratulations to the Nine of Ninevah. Bettie."

He handed it to Tim who passed it around among the boys. Mr. Curran came down with a dispatch from his wife, saying Ninevah had lighted bonfires all over the village.

The boys cheered when they heard it, and Tim said:

"Tell 'em we are going to do it again—and for them to buy more wood."

"I have two more challenges, boys," said Curran, "both from League clubs. The League is stirred to the bottom over your success. I accept all that come if they are in good places. We leave very early in the morning for Cincinnati. Go to bed early and get all the sleep you can."

"Good advice," said Gillette. "I am tired enough, you can bet."

"Call me early," said Phil, as he started up-stairs.

They retired early, and many who called to see them were quite disappointed.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN CINCINNATI.

The Nine left Cleveland at daylight and speeded toward Cincinnati on the fast express. They did not have on their uniforms, hence no one on board knew they were the Nine

who were beating the League everywhere they played. They occupied seats in a parlor car with Gussie Curran in their midst. They all paid her great deference, and seemed to regard her as their patron as well as her father was.

But she showed marked partiality to Dell all the way, and the others finally left him to entertain her.

When they reached the city they entered carriages and were driven to a hotel without attracting any attention. They were all well-dressed and bright-looking lads. When they went to register their names they were surprised at seeing the names of Fannie Mayes and her brother Maurice there.

"By George, boys!" said Tom, who was the first to see them there. "Maurice Mayes and his sister are here!"

"Whew!" said Phil. "What do you think of that, boys?"

"We are all right," said Tim. "We've hoodooed all Ninevah."

"There's Maurice now," said Jack, as young Mayes was seen coming toward them.

"Hello, boys!" cried Mayes, reaching out and shaking hands with everyone of them. "You've been wiping up the earth with 'em, eh! We had to come on here and see how you do it."

"Tim hoodoos 'em," said Babcock, and as the laugh went round the boys finished registering their names. Mayes had a message for nearly everyone of them from their friends and relatives. They were all in high spirits, and laughed and chatted at a lively rate. Maurice declared that everybody in Ninevah was proud of the team, and that when they went back home the whole town would turn out to greet them.

While the boys knew that Fannie Mayes was upstairs with Gussie Curran, not one of them went up to see her. She was the most exclusively aristocratic young lady in Ninevah, and had never spoken to any member of the Nine, nor to any one who worked in the mill. While Gussie's father was connected with the mill he was also connected with the Mayes' bank, and was one of the most influential business men in the town. She and Fannie had always been great friends, and now they were together for the baseball trip.

Just before going out to the baseball grounds Gussie sent down-stairs for Dell to meet her in the ladies' parlor. He went up in his uniform, and was introduced to Fannie. She was all smiles and cordiality, saying how glad everyone in Ninevah was over the success of the boys, adding:

"Maurice insisted on my coming with him to be with Gussie and see the games. He is anxious to join the team and help you to win games."

"We are glad to have you with us, Miss Fannie," said Dell. "The presence of young ladies is always encouraging to young men in any enterprise. But there is no vacancy in the team, hence no one can join it at present. We are about to start for the ball grounds."

"Please say to the boys that I congratulate them on their victories and hope to see them win the game to-day," she said as he was about to go.

"Thank you. They will feel very much flattered, indeed," and he bowed low to the two ladies and left. They soon went down to the carriage Mr. Curran had ordered for them, and Maurice joined them there. The Nine rode out in three carriages.

An immense crowd was there when they arrived—fully 20,000 people. Fannie was amazed at the enthusiasm and numbers.

The captain of the home team came forward and introduced himself to Dell.

"Glad to see you," said Dell, as he shook hands with him. "Sorry you did not introduce yourself to me at Cleveland. Would have been glad to meet you."

The fellow's face flushed, and he stammered out the excuse that the game was on when he got there, and when it ended he had to hurry for his train.

"We'll try to keep you hustling to-day," laughed Dell.

"That's what we expect, and we are going to see that you do some hustling yourselves before you beat us."

"That's something we expect, too. We are going to do our best to beat you."

The umpire called the game and the visitors went to the bat. The home team pitcher was a man of national reputation on the diamond, and he sent the ball with a force that threatened destruction to bat or catcher.

Si let two pass him and then, after having caught his style, smashed the third one way out to the left outfielder. He got to first and thought he saw a chance to make second. He made a dash for it and lost when within a foot of the plate. The Red Stockings laughed and said he was game, but they were there to keep them from doing that sort of thing.

"Don't you fellows laugh so soon," suggested Tim. Then the crowd laughed.

"Hoodoo 'em, Tim, me bye!" sung out a voice that was unmistakably Celtic in tone.

"I don't nade to," replied Tim. "We can bate 'em widout it," and his imitation of the brogue brought out another laugh.

"You can hoodoo all you want to," sung out one of the home team. "It won't work here, I guess."

"Bedad, thin, I'll be afther yez," returned Tim.

Phil took up the bat and got to first base. Pete sent him to second, and stopped at first. Jack moved them up another, and then George Gray took the bat. Tim ran up to him and made some funny passes over him and the bat, and then motioned all around the field with his hand. The crowd laughed, and the home team joining in it heartily.

George was a good batter. He let two balls pass him, and then smashed out a hot grounder that went bounding way out to the left. It got past the outfielder, who chased it. Phil chased over the home plate, with Pete close behind him. Jack made a slide for it, but was put to sleep within two feet of it. George rested on second.

The crowd roared and yelled, whilst Tim assumed a Napoleonic attitude with his arms across his breast, and surveyed the scene. When silence was restored he sung out:

"Who said the hoodoo wouldn't work here? Why, it's a dead easy thing!" and the crowd roared again at the expense of the home team.

Tom Gillette moved George up to third, and then Tim took up the bat with a smile on his boyish face.

"Now, girls!" he sung out. "just see me do it!"

He smashed the first ball that came, and it went straight back at the pitcher so quickly he had no time to make sure of it. It bounded from his hands and George crossed the plate ere he could recover it. From the first base Tim took off his cap, bowed, smiled and asked:

"Did you see me, girls?"

The girls screamed with laughter, and some cried out:

"Yes—yes—yes!"

"Thanks. It takes a pretty girl to work the hoodoo on a fellow."

Dell was the last at the bat, but he failed to bring Tom home, and the boys went to the field with three runs to their credit.

In the box Dell was the centre of attraction. His reputation as a pitcher had grown to be immense. Hundreds of feminine voices on the grand-stand were heard discussing his personal appearance. He was a handsome fellow at all times, and now he seemed more so than ever as he stood there waiting for the home team to take up the bat.

He quickly put out one of the best men of the home team.

"Sit down and rest, sonny," sung out Tim. "You're tired from too much talking about how you'd wipe up the ground with us!"

That made the fellow mad as a hornet, and he turned on Tim with:

"If I talked as much as you do I'd be dead."

"Dead men don't talk," retorted Tim. "Neither will you after we lay you out."

"We ain't laid out yet!"

"Well, you are, at any rate," said Tim. "Did you order silver handles on your coffin?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RED STOCKINGS LAID OUT.

The second man hit the ball and was caught out.

"Put him on ice!" yelled Tim.

The third man smashed out a grounder and got to first. The next moved him up to second, but the fifth was caught out by Tim, who sung out:

"Where's the grave diggers?"

The crowd became hilarious at the expense of the home team, and their captain went to each man and said in an undertone:

"Dempsey is trying to get us rattled. Don't mind him, keep cool, for they will be hard to beat."

In the second inning the Ninevahs made one run and again went to the field with four to their credit.

"Go in and try it again, sonny!" cried Tim. "Your girls are kinder getting ashamed of you and they are all pretty and sweet, too. We ain't got but two Ninevah girls here, but

my, such beauties!" and he looked around toward Gussie and Fannie on the grand-stand. Instantly thousands of eyes were turned in that direction to see those two beauties.

"Oh, my!" said Fannie, blushing and paling by turns. "This is awful!"

Gussie laughed and sat still so as not to betray herself to the crowd. She had become used to it.

"Keep still and they won't know us," whispered Gussie, as hundreds of opera glasses were looking for them.

It was a novel experience for Fannie, but her vanity was flattered by Tim's remark, and she felt kindly toward him for it.

Dell looked at the two girls, and Gussie waved her fan at him. He instantly turned and sent a ball curving at the batsman, who missed it.

"Ah!" cried Tim. "Look at your girl blushing for ye!"

The crowd roared and the fellow was mad. Tim was gradually breaking them all up.

The next was caught out, and Tim sung out:

"What'll yer say to yer girl?"

"Oh, I'm a married man," was the good-natured reply.

"Then Hivin help ye whin yer go home the night!"

The crowd almost went into convulsions. The fellow's wife of a year was on the grand-stand within ten feet of Gussie and Fannie, as was afterwards found out.

They got two men to third base, only to see them die there, and then another was caught out, retiring the Nine.

"Say! I'm tired!" yelled Tim. "Why don't you fellows play ball?"

"Say! I'll spank you if you don't shut up!" cried one of the home team, for which his captain called him down.

"Oh, you're hoodooed!" returned Tim, and the laughter that followed caused the fellow to grind his teeth in a rage. Tim had caught the crowd, and had the home team in a tremendous stew.

But in the third inning neither side made a run.

"We don't have to, you know," said Tim. "We're resting now to let you fellows do something. If we made any more runs your girls would shake you. We don't care to make that sort of trouble for you. Just see how happy our girls are up there."

Again the crowd tried to find the two Ninevah girls, and Fannie Mayes was in a terrible suspense. She was afraid they would be discovered by somebody. Tim was having plenty of fun.

In the fourth inning the home team made two runs, and Tim called out to them:

"Good—good! Make another and I'll hoodoo you again!"

The home captain laughed, and Tim cried out:

"Makes yer feel good, eh, cap'en? Been there myself; know how it feels. But don't build your hopes too high. Wait till the last inning. There's where the fun comes in."

In the fifth the boys made one more, and the home team one, placing the score 5 to 2 in favor of the visitors. In the sixth the home team made one more. The seventh showed hard work for nothing, as neither side made a run. In the eighth both sides made one run, leaving the Ninevahs two ahead to start the last inning with.

"Whoop!" yelled Tim, as they went to the bat the last time. "We've got you fellow now. Girls, don't be too hard on 'em. They've done their best, and that's all a fellow can do, you know."

Si took up the bat and was caught out on the first ball.

Phil followed and got to first.

Pete moved him up to second and rested at the first himself. Jack pushed them along, but George Gray smashed out a hot grounder that seemed good enough to bring Pete home, but he was put to sleep with his hand within six inches of the plate.

"What's the matter with that third base!" cried Tim, running up to it and falling flat across it and rolling over and over on it.

"That's all right now," he said as he got up. "Just smash out a hot grounder, Tom, and bring George home."

George was second. Tom gave the ball an almighty whack that sent it bounding way out to right outfielder. George made a tremendous slide, getting there with the ball.

"Judgment!" he yelled.

"Safe!" cried the umpire.

"No! No!" yelled every man of the home team.

"No! No!" chorused a thousand men in the big crowd, and every man and woman rose up and seemed to expect something terrible to happen.

The umpire stood still and waited for the tumult to cease.

He stood there fully five minutes ere he could be heard. Then he sung out:

"Play ball!"

Instantly bedlam broke loose again, and thousands shouted and yelled and waved hats and canes.

Dell waved his hand for silence. They wanted to hear what he had to say about it, and a hush fell upon them.

"We won't claim the run. We don't need it!" he sung out.

"Good boy!" yelled the crowd, and the game went on.

"I ought to have hoodooed the home plate instead of the third base," cried Tim, and the good humor of the crowd came back.

The boys went to the field for the last time, and Dell took up his position in the box. If the Ninevahs had a hard time on the bases, theirs was worse. One died within three feet of the home plate, while the audience yelled and cheered.

"Hoodooed!" yelled Tim.

The other two died at second and third and the game was ended. The Red Stockings had been defeated for the first time that season.

While the crowd was yelling and cheering one of the Red Stockings ran up to Tim and gave him a stunning kick. Quick as a flash Si Sturdivant gave him a blow in the ear that laid him out senseless on the grass. Some of the home team saw Si give him the blow, but had not seen him kick Tim. They thought it an unprovoked attack and began to pitch into him.

"Rally, Nine of Ninevah!" sung out Tim, and in less than three seconds the three Red Stockings were laid out. In ten seconds more the entire diamond was covered by a mass of men all eager to see the fight.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE NINEVAH NINE IN DRESS SUITS.

The fight began so suddenly, without any preliminary quarrel, the crowd did not realize it till the three home team men were laid out. Then, as others rushed to take a hand in it, the Ninevah boys seized their bats and began a furious defense. But in less than two minutes the police had put a stop to it.

Nobody was arrested, and the Nine returned to their hotel.

After supper they met the two girls in the parlor, and each said flattering things to the other. Tim made a good deal of fun for them for awhile, and then went out for a stroll with two of the Nine.

The next day the entire Nine bought dress suits and had them sent to the hotel. Mr. Curran told them that they had each about seven hundred dollars gate money.

They left for Pittsburg, soon after dinner, and Curran and the two girls were in the same car with them. Fannie Mayes enjoyed Dell's company very much, and he hers. She seemed to be surprised at finding him so well educated and gentlemanly in his deportment. There was not a really rough fellow among them unless it was Si, the young blacksmith. He was somewhat that way, but brave and generous to a fault.

They reached Pittsburg in time for supper at one of the best hotels in the city. None of the home team met them, as it was not known what train they would come on. The boys went to their rooms and put on their dress suits. Gussie and Fannie were amazed when they saw them enter the dining-room in a body, looking like young gentlemen going to a ball or the opera.

"They'll write about it to Ninevah," said Tim, "and everybody will say we have gone daft."

"I know mother will," laughed Will Babcock. "I am looking for a telegram telling me to send my money home to mother."

The boys laughed, and Phil said:

"I sent mother \$500 this morning."

"So did I," said Jack.

"I am going to send \$1,000 home to-morrow," said George Gray.

"Well, if I have luck to-morrow I'll do the same," said Si. Mr. Curran came over to their table, and said:

"Gussie and Fannie asked me to come over here and make sure you fellows are really the Ninevah Nine."

"Do you know us?" Tim inquired.

"Hardly—yet we thought we recognized some familiar voices among you. What's the racket anyhow?"

"We're playing dude," said Tim.

Maurice came over and said:

"You fellows are swell."

"Not a bit of it—we are born so, only didn't have the togs. We've got 'em now," and George Gray seemed to be very happy over the fact.

"Better send for your clawhammer suit or you can't run with us," said Jack. "We are licking the League all the way through, and when the season ends we won't notice common people."

The boys laughed, and after a few minutes more of badinage, they arose from the table and marched out in a body. Gussie and Fannie followed, and met them in the parlor, where Tim evoked much laughter by the airs he put on. Fannie thought him the funniest fellow she had ever seen.

They asked the girls to become their guests at the theatre for the evening, and they agreed. The entire party of thirteen repaired to the nearest theatre in carriages.

Only Maurice and Mr. Curran were without dress suits. After the theatre they had a late supper, at which Dell and Tom Gillette sang two songs.

The next morning their arrival was announced in the papers, and the captain of the home team called on them. He was a pretty tough sort of a fellow, Dell thought, but seemed to have a manly way about him.

A little later the hotel was crowded with sporting men, all eager to get points. The boys averaged at least thirty pounds lighter than the home team, hence the sporting men decided to back the latter.

"What odds are you giving?" asked one of the sports.

"That's just what I was going to ask you," laughed Dell.

"Well, I am not giving any odds to-day. You boys have a hoodoo with you, I am told," and the sport laughed and shook his head.

CHAPTER XX.

THE NINE IN PITTSBURG.

Pittsburg is a great baseball town. The people there are very fond of athletic sports of every kind, and when they think there is a chance to see a good game they turn out by thousands. Athletic Park was jammed with a mass of 20,000 people when the Nine of Ninevah entered it. The crowd was astonished at seeing a Nine composed of boys march in behind the stalwart home team.

"Are they the boys who have been beating the League everywhere they played?" asked hundreds of men as they looked at them. "Our boys will wipe up the ground with 'em."

When they were about to play a voice sung out:

"Where's yer hoodoo?"

"Wait and see," replied Phil.

"Are you him?"

"Do I look like a hoodoo?"

The crowd laughed, and a girlish voice sung out:

"No, you don't!"

"Ah! Are you there, sweetheart?" asked Phil, and the fun began at once. It is marvelous how a crowd of Americans go in for fun. That hoodoo business had caught the whole country, and thousands really believed in it, just as thousands believe in clairvoyance and fortune-telling. They mistook Phil for Tim, and Tim kept quiet in order to keep up the joke.

Si was the first at the bat. Dell had insisted that the Nine do their best in the first inning, in order to rattle the other fellows. The young blacksmith could bat like a giant, his business having developed his muscles to a marvelous degree of strength. The man in the box was a good pitcher with a style of his own. Si let two balls pass him, and then smashed the third one that made a crack like a pop of a rifle. It went bounding straight out to the center fielder, who failed to stop it. Si was a sprinter, too, and he went bounding from base to base with the speed of a deer, landing safely at third base.

Phil took up the willow, and after letting one ball pass him, smashed out a hot grounder to center field—almost as far as Si did. Si dashed over the plate, and Phil stopped at second.

Pete Boyden went to the willow and smashed out a ball that landed in the hands of the right fielder.

Jack Haralson smashed out a hot grounder that put Phil at third and himself at first. George Gray brought Phil home and moved Jack up to second. Tom Gillette made a

two bagger that landed Jack at the home plate and left George at third and himself at second.

Will Babcock was caught out, and Dell failed to bring any on bases home. They retired to the field with four runs to their credit.

"Hello, Tim!" came from all sides, as Tim went to his place.

He bowed and smiled all around, and the greatest curiosity was manifested by the crowd.

Dell went into the box and stood there, waiting for the batsman to get ready for work. He never looked better in his life, and many a bright-eyed girl gazed admiringly at him from the grandstand. The first batsman, a stalwart iron worker in one of the great mills, eyed him rather dubiously as he faced him.

He sent a curving, twisting ball at him, and he let it pass, but he struck at the second one and sawed the air. The third one also rested with the catcher, and he was out.

Dell struck the next two men out in hollow fashion.

"Oh, this is dead easy," said Tim, as he went waltzing to the home plate.

Si took the bat to give some more of his hard batting exhibition. He again let two balls pass him. Then he struck and missed. The home team pitcher was a good one. Si laughed and said:

"Gimme another like that."

He did, and Si sent it out like a cannon ball. He got to third base on it. He started to make for the home plate, when Dell yelled:

"Stay there!"

Quick as a flash he returned in time to save himself.

Phil was caught out, and Pete smashed the ball to left center and got to first.

Once more in the box, Dell played a splendid game. He put out the first batsman quickly, and the second came very near going the same way. The third man smashed out a two bagger, amid great applause. The fourth did the same thing bringing the third man home and stopping at second himself.

"Good boys—both of 'em!" cried Tim. "That's the way to play ball. But that's all you'll get in this inning," and it was.

CHAPTER XXI.

TIM AND THE BIG SPORT.

The crowd had now become worked up by the prospects of a good game. They cheered both teams when good work was done, and seemed to be utterly indifferent as to which side won. The bettors, of course, backed their favorites with all the encouragement they could give.

The third inning began with the score 5 to 1, in favor of the Ninevahs. The inning added one run to each side, so did the fourth, so that the fifth began with a score of 7 to 3.

"Now you fellows play ball!" yelled a big-voiced sport to the home team.

"Why don't you root for 'em?" Tim inquired of him. "Holler loud when they hit a ball or run to bases! You ain't much good to a team!"

The crowd laughed and the sport got mad.

"No use to get mad," said Tim, "I can hoodoo you and lay you over my knee."

"Oh, shut up! Go suck your milk bottle!" retorted the sport.

"Too many suckers like you about," said Tim. "I wouldn't bring a bottle of milk within a mile of you!"

Then Tim turned to the game. One of the home team made a fine play—a two bagger—and the crowd yelled. Tim turned to the big sport and sung out:

"Whoop! Yell! Root for all you are worth, old man!"

The sport didn't notice him. He was eager to help the home team all he could.

The batter advanced the man on second to third on a scratch hit.

The next batsman smashed out a hot grounder, and the fellow on third sprinted for the home plate. Phil got the ball and sent it whizzing to the catcher. The fellow made a tremendous slide for it, but was within a foot of the home plate, when Tom tapped him on the shoulder with the ball.

"Judgment!" he yelled.

"Out!" cried the umpire, and the crowd looked at Tim in silence, for a moment or two. Tim bowed, smiled, and called out to the sport:

"Did you see ne do it?"

Then the storm of cheers and yells broke loose. The bel-lowing sport seemed dazed for a few moments. He looked at Tim with an expression of one who had just seen something for the first time in his life. The entire crowd looked at him and laughed. The boys in the audience seemed to enjoy it, for they guyed him mercilessly.

The game went on to the end of the inning, neither side making a run.

The rest of the game was not very interesting, as it was a forlorn hope for the home team, and the game ended in the ninth inning with the score of 7 to 5 in the Ninevah's favor.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

If the noise, confusion and excitement at the other games was great, that at Pittsburg was greater. Thousands remained at the grounds long after the game ended.

The boys were very tired, so they went to bed early and slept soundly till eight o'clock the next morning. Mr. Curran got a settlement with the treasurer of the Athletic Grounds and had the money in hand for them when they went down to breakfast. They had won a good deal on the game, too, and so all were in good humor.

When the two girls appeared at breakfast they found their table covered with flowers, and they were delighted.

The Nine then took the train for Philadelphia, where they won the game easily with the Athletics, and the big Pittsburg sport, who had followed them, won a big wager.

From Philadelphia they went to Washington, where they had a walkover with the Nine there. The Pittsburgh sport won another pile there, and so did the boys. Tim made no end of fun with his hoodoo business, and the crowd seemed to fall in love with him from the start. Many Senators and Congressmen were there to see it, and some of them rooted like old sports.

From Washington they went to Brooklyn to play the home team there. Brooklyn has always been a good baseball town. A vast crowd turned out to greet them, and the betting ran high. The home team was one of the crack Nines of the League. The citizens did not believe the boys could beat them, hence the latter found plenty of men to put up money against them. The Pittsburg sport put up five thousand dollars even on the Ninevah. He would back them with his last dollar.

It was a hard game. The score stood 5 to 5 at the beginning of the ninth inning. They would have to play another inning if the score tied, and the bets would all be hung up till it was decided. The Ninevahs played as never before in their lives, and Tim hoodooed in vain. The home team held them down, and they had to go to the field on the tie.

Then the home team did its best to make a run. Dell put out the first man with his curves, and another was caught out by Will Babcock. The third died near the home plate, and the inning ended with a tie.

The cheering was terrific.

"Come to the bat, Nine of Ninevah, for the tenth inning," cried Dell.

They went with a yell, and the game went on amid a scene of excitement seldom seen on the field. Si smashed out a hot grounder and got to first. Phil knocked a two bagger that sent him to third, getting to second himself. Pete took the bat, and Dell sung out:

"Give 'em a hot one now and bring Si home!"

He smashed out a hot grounder to center field. Si dashed over the plate amid a wild scene of cheering, but Phil was put to sleep at third. The Pittsburg sport went into a wild series of yells that were heard above the roar of the multitude.

George sent Pete to second, but was put to sleep at first himself. Tim took up the bat and hugged, kissed and patted it, after which he pointed it at Pete, saying:

"Tell him to come home, Alana!"

He held his ear to it, as if listening.

"It said something which I can't make out. Come on with your curves," and he faced the pitcher. He let two balls pass him, and then whacked the third one that came with a tremendous force. It slipped past the outfielder on the right, and Pete sprinted for home, crossing the plate just as Tim fell across the second base, having made a two bagger. The applause was tremendous, and lasted several minutes.

"I hoodooed the bat!" cried Tim.

"So you did, my little game cock!" roared out the Pittsburg sport.

Dell took up the bat to bring Tim home, but the little fellow was put to sleep at third.

"Now go in and try your luck," sung out Dell to the home team boys, as the Ninevahs went to the field. Dell went into the box and worried them till he put out one. But they made one run. Then another was caught out. One made a splendid two bagger smash, and the next would have brought him home had Jack not caught him out—thereby winning the game by one run.

Never in the history of baseball did a crowd yell and cheer as did that vast multitude in Brooklyn that day. They kept it up for ten minutes after the game ended. Dell was taken on the shoulders of the Ninevah boys and borne around the field. Gussie Curran and Fannie Mayes stood up and cheered with the rest of them. In her enthusiasm Fannie threw him a bouquet. He caught it and kissed his hand to her.

The boys returned in triumph to their hotel.

"A letter for you, sir," said the hotel clerk, handing a letter to Dell. He glanced at it, recognized the handwriting, and went to his room to read it.

"I am so glad to read in the papers of your glorious success," she wrote—Bettie Cassels—"and am the happiest girl in Ninevah to-day because of what you said about going into a lifetime co-partnership with me. Of all men in the wide world, you would be the one I would choose, and now that you have chosen me, I am too happy even to give expression to my thoughts and feelings. I can find words to say, though, that my life shall be devoted to you, Sidney. But one thought shall dwell with me when we are one, and that is your happiness. When you want me, tell me so and name the day."

"Well, that's the biggest stake I've won yet," he said, as he put the letter back into his pocket. "She is a prize worth having—practical, sensible and free from gush, with a heart to feel for others. I'll telegraph her that we'll be in Ninevah to-morrow night—though Mr. Curran has already let the people there know it. I guess the whole town will turn out to meet us."

Early the next morning the Nine went over to New York and took the train for Ninevah. They were in a jolly good humor, for every one of them had a snug little fortune won in the games that laid out the champion teams of the National League. Little Tim Dempsey was about \$4,000 ahead, for he had been lucky in once getting odds of five to one and cleaned out his man.

"What are you going to do with your money, Tim?" Gussie Curran asked him on the train.

"Buy or build a home for mother, and then keep on making money till I am old enough to marry. Say, Miss Gussie, don't you be in a hurry about getting married. Wait and see me when I am older."

Both girls screamed with laughter and Gussie said:

"Why, Tim, you are so fond of joking one can never know when you are in earnest."

"Oh, I'll put it in writing if you say so."

"But you might play some hoodoo game on me even then."

"Confound it, you've hoodooed me yourself!" he exclaimed, "and my hoodoo isn't worth a snap against you."

"My! Gussie!" exclaimed Fannie, "I really believe he is in earnest!"

"Well, I don't," laughed Gussie.

"Just tell me what to do to prove it to you," he suggested.

"Well, I may some day," she said. "It seems to me that if you were in love with me you would not say so in the presence of others."

"Oh, pshaw! Half the Nine is in love with you and the other half with Miss Fannie. They just speak out and say so, too."

"Well, none of them have said so to me," said Fannie.

"Nor to me, either," assented Gussie.

"They're afraid to. You two are so tony at home they—"

"Oh, that'll do. I don't want to hear any more of that. You are all my friends now."

"And mine, too," said Fannie. "Who is it that's in love with me, Tim?"

"Come, now, let every fellow tell his own love story—I've told mine—but I don't know whether I've got the sack or not."

"Well, I haven't given you any sack, Tim," said Gussie.

"Will you wait and give me a chance?"

"You can have the same chance that any other man has. I am not in love with anybody just now."

"What in thunder have you hoodooed me for, then?"

"I haven't."

"Well, you've bewitched me, and that's the same thing, if not worse," and the two girls laughed merrily. They declared him a puzzle or an incorrigible—they didn't know which.

It was night when the train reached Ninevah and the entire village was at the station to meet the boys. How the mothers kissed and hugged their boys. Tim's mother nearly hugged him to death.

"Say!" he sung out. "I haven't any sister! Won't some other fellow's sister just hug and kiss me?"

The crowd roared with laughter and little Daisy Miller ran up to him, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him.

"Good for you, Daisy!" Tim cried.

"Oh, I am going to kiss everyone of the Nine," she said. "You have all been like good brothers to me," and she caught Dell round the neck and kissed him. Each of the Nine followed and got one from her. The crowd knew how they had helped her and her widowed mother along and cheered her for her outspoken expression of gratitude.

Suddenly Dell found himself face to face with Bessie Cassels. Their eyes met, and a silent hand squeeze told of his loyalty to her. Then others rushed forward to shake his hand, and she was pushed aside by the crowd. But she was happy. The warm pressure of his hand had assured her.

Suddenly the crowd began calling his name:

"Dell, Dell! Speech, speech!"

"Oh, thunder," he said, "I can't make a speech!"

"But you must say something, if only to thank your friends and neighbors for this reception," said Curran, pushing him toward a box on the station platform. He mounted it and bared his head.

"Friends and neighbors!" he said. "I am sure we feel grateful to you for this kind reception. Mothers, fathers and sisters have come to greet sons and brothers, and I suspect a few sweethearts are here, too. Some of us have lost our hearts, but not one lost his head in the battles we have fought on the diamond. I here proclaim it to the world that a braver set of boys than the Nine of Ninevah never raised a bat on any diamond. As their leader I watched them closely. They obeyed every order in a game, and Mr. Curran will testify that a more moral and orderly set of boys never got out of sight of their mothers. They have made money—thousands of dollars—and everyone has told the other what he was going to do with it. In every case it was mother and father who were first in their thoughts. I commend them to the community as the gems of good citizens. I commend them to the young ladies of Ninevah as the best and safest sweethearts in all the land. They are the boys who beat the League, and if any Ninevah girl captures one of them she will have done what the National League of baseball teams could not do."

How the crowd cheered and laughed! Everyone was pleased, and many expressed surprise at the neat little speech Dell had made. They finally dispersed and went to their homes, proud of the fame of their little village, which had gone out all over the country.

In less than a week five new houses were going up in Ninevah. One of them was for Dell and Bettie Cassels had planned the size and shape of it. Tom Gillette bought a nice house and furnished it beautifully, after which he whispered to little Daisy Miller that he would like to have her there as the mistress of it.

"But I can't leave my mother," she said, loyal to the last.

"Bring her along," he said, and so he married her.

When Dell's house was finished, he invited all his friends to help him open it. They came and he and Betty were married there.

Si married Polly Gray—George's sister. The next season saw three married members in the Nine of Ninevah; but that did not prevent them from again beating the league. They came back home richer by thousands. At the end of the second season Will Babcock married. Then Jack Haralson married Jennie Babcock. But the greatest surprise came when the announcement of the engagement of Tim Dempsey to Gussie Curran was made. She was a year older than he, but Tim had displayed a wonderful tact for making money, and so her parents, as well as she, encouraged his attentions. A few months later Phil Durham became engaged to Fannie Mayes. The Nine had raised every member's family in the social and financial scale till they moved in the best circles of society in the village. They all entered into business that prospered, and to this day they are known as the Nine of Ninevah; or, The Boys Who Beat the League.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG TEXAS JACK; OR, THE BOYS OF THE PANHANDLE RANGE." By An Old Scout.

CURRENT NEWS

Lieutenant Ralabushkin, of the Russian army, was killed the other day by a fall from an aeroplane while flying at Peterhof. A passenger who was with him fell at the same time, but escaped with a broken arm. The death of Lieutenant Ralabushkin constitutes the 272d fatality in the history of aviation and the 54th since the beginning of the year.

George Jefferson, a farm hand of Middletown, N. Y., who had been warned several times by his employer not to smoke while working around the farm buildings, is suffering from severe burns he sustained as the result of a cow's kick. While the man was passing one of the cows in the stable the animal kicked him, striking some matches that he had in his hip pocket in such a way as to ignite them and set his clothes on fire.

When two steam shovels met at Culebra Cut, on May 24, one working from the west and the other from the east, the first through cut of the Panama Canal at grade from ocean to ocean was completed. The whistles blew and hundreds of workmen quit their jobs to cheer when the big engines scooped out the last thread of earth that joined the two continents. There is still excavating to be done in broadening the canal, but less than 8,000,000 cubic yards of earth remain to be removed to bring it to the necessary width. The amount of excavating, however, will be increased more or less by slides.

Mrs. Clara Bradley, grand president of the Women's Auxiliary of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, of San Francisco, says transportation companies soon may employ women as engineers, conductors and even as firemen. A woman has sufficient strength to operate the levers of oil-burning engines, which are coming into general use, said Mrs. Bradley. "It is not at all improbable that railroading will come to be a field of industry for our sex." Sessions of the convention of the auxiliary and the trainmen were held recently. Discussion of the question of a working-men's compensation act was resumed at the men's meeting.

The old assertion that a woman "can do anything with a hairpin" was given new weight, when Miss Mary Riddle, of Warrensburg, Mo., straightened out one of them, bent the end into a hook and with it removed from her throat the spindle of a top which for ten years had caused her great suffering. For years Miss Riddle suffered frequent attacks of extreme nausea. Many forms of treatment by physicians failed to relieve her. Finally she was told she must go to a hospital and submit to an operation, but she dreaded the operating table, and refused. Then with the hairpin she located a metallic substance and a moment later drew out the spindle. "I have a faint remembrance of having swallowed something of this sort when I was very young," she told the physician.

Justice Deuel, in Special Sessions, handed down a decision the other day holding that a slot machine which vends varying amounts of gum or candy for a penny is a gambling device. Benjamin Stein, who was arrested for having such a contrivance in his shop, at No. 76 Ludlow street, was fined \$25. In his opinion Justice Deuel said that the machine was calculated to lure the last penny from the schoolboy's pocket and that it was evident that the ingenuity of the inventor had been equal to the problem of insuring a profit to the machine during a given series of plays. Prosecution against Stein and other candy shop men was instituted by the Children's Society, whose agents reported that such slot machines were numerous in the vicinity of schools and that their influence was most demoralizing.

There was placed on record in the office of the clerk of Wilkes County, Ga., what is considered the most unusual mortgage ever recorded in this or any other county. The security named in the recorded instrument consists of the following valuable property, to-wit: "Nine chicken hens, two sow hogs and a .32-calibre pistol." The amount of the debt thus secured is \$23 and it is provided that if the obligation is not met at maturity the property mentioned therein shall be sold at public outcry. All homestead exemption rights are waived by the maker of the mortgage. The question is being asked: Does this mortgage emphasize the increasing value of the "hog and hominy" propaganda, or is it but another indication of the extreme stringency in the land about which so much has been said and written—which?

Rapid progress is being made in the construction of the main exhibit buildings at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco. There will be fourteen main exhibit buildings. Work upon the Machinery Building, the largest of the exhibit group, was begun early in the year, and it will be ready for the complete installation of exhibits by the opening date, February 20, 1915. The Machinery Building will have nearly eight acres of floor space. There will also be an auxiliary structure to be known as the Gas and Fuels Building. Electrical machinery, instead of being placed in a separate building, will be located in the Machinery Building and classed under the general heading of machinery. All parts of the building will be served by adequate crane facilities. Electric current, alternating and direct, gas and water, will be available in any portion of the building; compressed air and steam will be provided in a section adjacent to the Gas and Fuels Building. General illumination is to be provided by the exposition company, but a nominal charge will be made to exhibitors for other utilities service they desire. Special rates for power will be made to exhibitors who use it to show machinery in motion. The floor of the Machinery Building is designed for a load of two hundred pounds per square foot. No charge will be made for exhibit space.

THE GIRL HE LEFT BEHIND

—OR—

THE HERO OF THE 7th

By J. P. RICHARDS.

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER IX (continued)

"Is it not sublime, Miss Dutton?" he asked, dramatically. "The silvery moonlight streaming across this bare floor like bars of silver? Ah, the night, the beautiful, starry night, with her ever changing glints and gleams, her pearly dew, her——"

"Yes, I dearly love the night, Mr. Roth," Dorothy Dutton's voice broke in, and the other girls knew she had her mouth full of pie from the way she talked. "For one always has a better appetite at night than during the day, and oh, how divinely beautiful everything looks by moonlight! See that mound of jelly. It looks like an immense ruby. And the lobster. It reminds me of coral. And, oh! this cream pie! In after years when we have parted forever, Mr. Roth, for, of course, we must part, each to go our separate ways, and never look upon each other's face again"—swallowing a sob and a chuck of pie at the same time—"I shall never, never look backward over the flight of years without thinking of you and cream pie. And—my—heart—will break. Boo—hoo!"

A suppressed giggle went round among the others, as they listened, but so absorbed was Miss Dutton in her poetical lover and her pie, that she never heard it at all.

"She certainly takes the cake," Winona whispered to Freda.

"Takes the cake," Freda echoed. "Takes the cake, Win? Hang it, she takes everything she can get her hands on, and the other members of the jolly quartette can starve for all she cares. When that girl dies, providing I survive her, of course, instead of lilies, I am going to put the biggest jelly cake I can find in her hands."

A suppressed burst of laughter followed her remarks, and then the fun went on. In after years when sorrow and pain had set their heavy hands upon each young head, they could all look back to that hour as the merriest, maddest one in their lives. In the midst of danger and death, Handsome Jack, the hero of the 7th, often thought with heartache and longing of sweet Freda May, his first and only love. Not one of them dreamed as they sat there laughing, whispering and feasting of how they were destined to be parted by cruel fate.

"Here's to the jolly quartette," and Dick Burnett rose to his feet, waving a glass of lemonade over his head. "The four prettiest girls that ever enslaved a fellow's heart, or cribbed apples from a neighbor's orchard."

"And here's to the four dandy dudes of the crack 7th," Freda quickly responded. "The handsomest men in the regiment that ever emptied a bottle of wine."

Again that suppressed burst of merry laughter went round and then a deep silence fell upon them for a few moments. It did not last long, however, for it was not in the nature of those merry madcaps and light-hearted young

men to long remain serious. That would come with the swiftly flying years.

Just when the fun was at its height, and they were beginning to be less cautious, the door leading into the chapel suddenly opened, and there, standing in the light of a flickering candle which she carried in one bony hand, looking for all the world like a huge specter, was Miss Coffeen.

For an instant no one spoke. A stillness, almost death-like, reigned, and then Miss Coffeen said in her deepest bass:

"Young ladies—what is the meaning of this disgraceful scene? Are you aware that you have forever ruined the reputation of Madam La Rue's select seminary for young women? Explain to me the meaning of this, vile wretches that you are, and you, young men, you, who have also disgraced the uniforms you wear, begone that I may deal with these brazen, shameless——"

CHAPTER X.

HONORED BY THE GALLANT 7TH.

The enraged woman got no further, for there was a sudden rustle of skirts, a patter of flying feet, and before she realized what had happened, Miss Coffeen found herself in the room off the chapel with the door locked behind her, held tightly between Freda May and Winona Avery, while the key reposed safely in the pocket of the latter.

"Yes, come right in, you old darling, you lovely baby dimple, and give us all fits," Freda cried in triumph, dragging the gasping spinster toward the four young men who were now convulsed with laughter. "Come right up here and take a look at a real live man. You may even put your hand on one of their heads, for upon my word and honor they won't bite. These fellows are tame you know, Sallie dear."

"Wretch!" Miss Coffeen gasped, struggling to free herself, and for the first time mindful of her bare feet which she had hastily thrust into slippers, her night dress only half concealed by a loose flannel dressing robe, and worst of all the huge, white frilled night cap that covered her bald head. For Miss Coffeen always removed her wig at night, being very saving, also her false set of teeth. And in her hatred of the four girls who delighted in teasing her and making her life miserable, she forgot all about her personal adornment in order to have revenge; she lost no time in rushing to the chapel, but alas! it was to her sorrow.

"Now, don't be shy, Sallie, dear, for we want to give you a good time," Freda went on. "We want to let you know how much fun there is in this world. Come right along, and meet the young gentlemen of the 7th. There are four of them, now, take your choice. There are four different types, and I'm sure each one will please you."

"Wretch!" cried Coffeen again spluttered. "Wretch, let me go this instant, else I will call aloud for madam!"

(To be Continued)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

James Montgomery, elevator boy in the building at Summer and Bedford streets, Boston, proved his heroism the other afternoon when fire was discovered in the room occupied by the T. H. Cowen Millinery Company. Though almost overcome by smoke, Montgomery stuck to his post, and transferred to safety a score of young women employed by the millinery concern.

The development of sport and athletics may soon be taken under the direct supervision of the French Government, the idea being that physical training of the rising generation is quite as important to the nation as art or railways, and that it is in accord with the new spirit of progress in France. The French Cabinet, it is understood, has under consideration the question of asking Parliament to create an Under Secretary of State, who shall be attached to the Ministry of Labor, and whose duties will be solely to look after sporting affairs.

O. Yaneyama, managing director of the largest private bank in Japan, is hurrying home after a tour of Europe. He said there was great anxiety in Japanese financial circles over the California question, as the Japanese banks had big stakes in California. If Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Taft were President, he added, the anxiety would be much greater, but he believed President Wilson was a friend of Japan. He expressed his confidence that Japan would hold her own in California, and that the progression of her financial policy would soon assume its usual course.

"Movies" in a mining camp 300 miles from a railroad, in Alaska, are told of in a letter received by Edward Williams, of Oconto, Wis., from his brother Arthur, who is the proprietor of the motion picture house he tells of, and who formerly lived in Marinette. The Alaskan says he is doing a thriving business. He gets film changes every time a dog train reaches the camp, and when it is necessary to show the same films several months in succession the miners show their appreciation of his enterprise by attending the same program every night at one dollar per show.

Capt. T. P. H. Whitelaw, of San Francisco, Cal., has located an iron chest, which contains \$5,000 in gold ingots, at the bottom of the Bay of Angel Island, and will attempt to recover the fortune by means of an electro-magnet. The safe dropped from the hold of the steamer Corcoran, which was rammed and turned turtle after colliding with the steamer Seminole in a dense fog some months ago. Owing to the depth of the water, Captain Whitelaw has been unable to send a diver down to make a line fast so the safe might be raised. This will be the first time magnets have been used for this purpose in that locality.

The Long Island Express, which has been in operation for more than fifty years, went out of existence recently,

and the entire express system of Long Island was taken over by the Adams Express Company, by which it will be operated. Preparations for this transfer have been under way of several weeks. All employees of the Long Island Company go with the merger. A single charge to or from all parts of the United States will be given by the new management. Shippers heretofore paid one charge to the Long Island Company and another charge to the company which carried the goods beyond the Long Island Company's zone.

Remarkable developments have occurred in the mysterious case of the young German who was found shot to death recently on the ramparts at Toulon, the great French naval depot. Both English and French police are trying to tear aside the veil of mystery. Behind it they will find an international intrigue, they are convinced. Papers found on the body led the police to believe that the murdered man was Frederick Hunscheidt, who had lodgings in Melrose Gardens, West Kensington, London, last March, but Hunscheidt appeared at Scotland Yard recently. After examining photographs of the Toulon victim, he told the detectives he was a fellow German, whom he knew as Ritter. Hunscheidt said Ritter, who spoke or pretended to speak no English, employed him as interpreter here. Soon after Ritter's departure a well-dressed woman went to the West Kensington lodgings and took away Ritter's belongings.

The remarkable advance made in the science of aviation since Orville Wright made the first public flights in a heavier-than-air machine in Fort Myer, Va., in 1908, is the subject of a document compiled by the War Department and just made public. Although the honor of inventing and utilizing the aeroplane belongs to the United States, it is disclosed that virtually all the advances made in the utilization of the air machines have been accomplished by foreign airmen, principally Frenchmen. In 1909, the records show, the greatest height attained by a heavier-than-air machine was 1,450 feet. The mark now stands at more than 20,000 feet, and the height of more than 10,000 has been attained by a dirigible balloon. The aeroplanes have demonstrated they can rise higher and much more rapidly than the balloon type of air craft, and for that reason their efficiency in a military sense is regarded as much greater. In both speed and duration of flight the records made since 1909 have been remarkable. In that year the speed record was 48 miles an hour, and the length of time a machine kept in the air was 4 hours and 17 minutes. The record for speed now is 108.9 miles an hour, made by Vidrines, of France, and another Frenchman, Fourny, raised the record for duration of flight to 13 hours and 17 minutes. Busson, still another Frenchman, recently established a record for speed with passengers. With five persons besides himself in his machine he made 54 miles an hour in sustained flight. The War Department records show six persons have been carried to a height of 2,053 feet.

On the Wheel for a Fortune

—OR—

The Wonderful Adventures of a Boy Bicyclist

By WILLIAM WADE.

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER X (continued)

Hester passed into the inner room of the cabin, but in a short time she reappeared, clad in the garments of a white woman, and she washed the paint from her face.

Then Horace saw that she was a woman of forty odd years of age probably, and that she had an intelligent honest face, though she looked careworn, and her expression was one of deep melancholy, as if she brooded much upon some great sorrow.

She wore a neat, well-fitting dress of gray homespun, the skirts of which were rather short Indian leggins and mocasins, and a felt hat. About her waist was a broad leather belt, which supported a brace of seven-shooters and a formidable looking hunting knife. Her long, luxuriant black hair fell unconfined upon her shoulders.

Hester's whole appearance indicated the true border woman, one who was brave, self-reliant, and well fitted for the life she led.

As Horace led the way toward the stable, Hester said:

"When I returned to the valley, I detected signs that some one had come to it while I was away, so it was that I came to the cabin door, hatchet in hand, ready to meet a foe."

The stable reached, Horace unlocked the door. Upon opening it they saw the half-breed crouching against the rear wall. His hands were still tied. He glared at the whites. A look of recognition and menace flamed in his eyes as he saw Hester.

"He seems to know you," said Horace, when they turned away, and he had locked the door after Hester had taken a good look at the prisoner.

"Yes," she replied. "And I know him now. He murdered a white man at the mines. I was the witness who denounced him. He escaped the rope—by fleeing in the night, through the help of some of the Indian miners. He hates me. He thirsts for my blood, and if he can, he will take vengeance upon me."

Horace explained fully why he had brought the half-breed to the valley, and Hester admitted that what he had done might be for the best.

"We must guard the wretch closely. As long as we have him a prisoner here, we may feel reasonably secure in the hope that Buckley will not find us," said Hester.

"But the rascal must have food. I shall have to untie his hands, so that he can eat," he added.

"Yes," assented Hester.

A little later the boy and the medicine woman returned to the stable.

Horace went in and untied the hands of the prisoner while Hester stood at the door revolver in hand. The half-breed ate in sullen silence. Then Horace again tied his hands. He did not dare to leave him with his hands free, even though it did not seem possible that he could get out of the stable.

Hester invited the lad to take a walk around the Ownerless Valley. Sylvia went with them. On the way Horace spoke of himself, and told how he had been sent out as a bicycle tourist and photographer by the newspaper.

They made a circuit around the confines of the valley. Occasionally Hester paused to point out some bit of scenery that was particularly fine. Horace had his kodak with him and he took several views.

"You see, the walls of the valley are steep and inaccessible. At the lowest points the natural battlements tower aloft," remarked Hester, as they were returning.

"Yes, and do you mean to say the only way into the valley is through the pass by which I entered?" he asked.

"Yes. The only way by which any one can come in is by the route through the pass, unless they should find some means to lower themselves down the sheer sides of the lofty walls. And that would be difficult indeed."

"It is a wonderful valley."

"It is indeed. I have thought it might once have been the great crater of an extinct volcano which had been filled with rich earth, gradually brought down and deposited by the stream. It may have taken ages to form the valley soil, and as an evidence of something like volcanic origin, I can show you a boiling spring in the valley, and a natural fountain where steam and water is constantly thrown high into the air."

"That would seem like evidence that the volcano was not extinct but only sleeping—that its fires smoldered, deep down in the earth, even at this day. Is there not reason to fear an eruption? Such things have happened, even long after the volcano has been supposed to be extinct," said Horace.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESCAPE OF THE HALF-BREED.

I have never thought much about the possibility of an eruption. But now you mention it, I think of course it is not impossible, though hardly probable," replied Hester in answer to the lad's last remark.

After that the lone woman of the valley led Sylvia and her boy guest to the boiling spring, and the natural fountain of which she had spoken.

On their way back to the cabin they turned aside to the entrance of the valley, for Hester said to Horace:

"I want to show you the lookout rock."

She led the way into the pass for a little way and then began to ascend at one side, where the rocks formed a long flight of irregular steps.

It seemed to Horace that the steps were not the work of nature alone, and he so observed.

"You are right I think. Indeed, I am pretty sure the Indians must have made these steps years ago, and since I know what the chief told you, that the valley was the burial place of the great chiefs of his tribe, I am more than ever convinced that I am right," replied Hester.

Horace gave Sylvia his hand, and they followed Hester up the rock height until they came out upon a flat mountain top.

From that elevation they commanded an extended view of the surrounding lava fields and the barren desert.

(To be continued.)

NEWS PARAGRAPHS

A verdict of acquittal was returned at Belleville, Ill., in the case against William H. Degen, an undertaker of East St. Louis; William U. Halbert, former public administrator, and Michael Keniley, East St. Louis jailer, who were charged with conspiracy to defraud the estate of the late James Connor, a hod-carrier. Degen, the undertaker, collected \$1,122 for Connor's funeral. At the trial it was testified that the coffin, for which \$600 was charged, was worth \$85; that in the funeral procession there were three carriages instead of nineteen paid for, and that there were no flowers, for which \$35 was paid.

Lotteries have for several years been abolished in France, but a limited kind of official hazard has survived in the shape of prizes attached to certain great loans or shares. Most of the loans of the city of Paris have prizes of from \$50,000 to \$100,000, and several minor ones attached to them, and periodical drawings take place. Recently a new apparatus for the drawing was employed. The old one was a glass cylinder containing as many brass counters as there were numbers in the loan or share issue for which the prizes were to be drawn, and complaint was made that thousands of these brass counters, once they fell into certain positions, were never stirred in all the drawings, and lost their chance. The new apparatus is a crystal globe of perfect transparency in which all the counters, as the globe revolves, have an equal chance. An automatic device has been added, so that a man standing several yards away and pressing an electric button causes a number to drop out of the wheel, to which the corresponding prize is attributed.

D. M. Parry, former President of the National Association of Manufacturers, attended a meeting of the association at Detroit to introduce a resolution condemning the proposed exemption of incomes under \$4,000 from the proposed income tax. He says he has not consulted manufacturers, but believes they are with him in opposition to the establishment of a taxpaying class in this country. He regards the tax exemption as vicious because it discriminates in favor of the many at the expense of the few, and says the tendency of such legislation is to array the rich and poor against each other, while a just law would give them a common interest in the affairs of Government by equalizing the burdens according to the earning power of the energy, industry, and talent of the citizen. Mr. Parry favors an income tax law, but thinks the exemption ought to be fixed at incomes under \$2,000. Such a provision, by including a greater number in the taxpaying class, he says, would enable the Government to get a larger revenue and at the same time avoid a discrimination which, he says, is wrong in principle.

In Madagascar a ride on the railway is something of a luxury, owing to the high rates. As for the freight charges, if enforced in this country, they would put the Erie Railroad in a position to pay 10 or 15 per cent. on its common

stock. Through service over the new line, which runs from Tananarive, the capital, and Tamatave, the principal port, was inaugurated on March 9. The road is 229 miles long, and cost \$13,21,100, or nearly \$58,000 a mile. The company operates in a biweekly passenger and mail service, making the trip in fifteen hours, and a through daily freight service of 36 hours, as well as a local freight service. The first-class passenger fare is 6.2 cents per mile; second-class, 3.1 cents; and third class, 1.24 cents, with a 25 per cent. reduction on 30-day round-trip tickets. Baggage and express packages cost 31 cents per metric ton per mile. Freight is classified into five categories and pays on the up-trip from 1.5 to 18 cents per ton per mile. The new road is evidently proving satisfactory to the colony, for it has started construction of another line from Tananarive to Atsirabe, 107 miles south.

It has just been discovered that at St. Germain du Bois, France, there exists a man, Pierre Jean Bossu, who has been the father of thirty children. He lives in a miserable thatched hut, which he built himself of mud and wood. It is now a crazy affair which sways in the wind and leaks when it rains. It contains one room only, and it is in the room that he has brought up his family. Of the first marriage there were seventeen boys and one girl, and by his second wife he became the father of seven more boys and five girls. To-day there are only ten living. The children have frequently slept, to the number of seven or eight, in the same room with their parents, on a bed composed of four planks. Their father is now 71, and of a very cheerful disposition. His wages have never exceeded \$1.75 per week, which he earns by cultivating vegetables. The State makes him a payment of \$1.75 a year per child for having raised a family of more than three children up to the age of 16. His brother Claude has also been married twice, and has a family of 23.

The National Marine League established at Washington is organized "to awaken all the people of the United States, whether living on the seacoast or in the interior, to a full understanding of the vital importance of re-establishing an American overseas commercial marine. To urge upon the American people the opportunity offered by the opening of the Panama Canal and the necessity of providing a modern merchant marine of their own to utilize this new waterway and trade route for the further expansion of our foreign commerce, particularly with South America and Asia. To formulate for the accomplishment of these purposes definite measures which will command the support, from the standpoint of our national interest and development, of all who recognize the importance of these objects, and particularly to combine in one non-partisan program the creation of 'free port' areas and the granting of payments for carrying the mails sufficient to secure the establishment of American steamship lines."

TIMELY TOPICS

ST. PAUL'S SINKING.

Renewed anxiety as to the safety of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, will be aroused by the further report which the dean and chapter have received from Sir Thomas Fox. This report shows that St. Paul's is in real danger unless steps are taken promptly to check the subsidence which is steadily going on. The dome and walls have been found to be out of plumb generally in a southwesterly direction. This divergence would be unimportant if the building were at rest, but it is steadily increasing, and the danger point must be reached sooner or later. Sir Francis Fox adds:

"The cathedral is underlaid by wet sand and gravel, which constitute an unreliable and unstable condition of affairs which requires remedy."

ANOTHER LIGHTNING CALCULATOR.

A doctor at an asylum in Nantes, France, has discovered among his patients a lightning calculator, who, although he can scarcely read and cannot write, solves mental arithmetic problems involving large numbers.

Asked how many seconds there were in 39 years 3 months and 12 hours, he gave the correct answer in 32 seconds. Explaining how he calculated the number of seconds in thirty years, he said:

"I know by heart that there are 3,536,000 seconds in a year. I multiply 30,000,000 by 30, which gives me 900,000,000. Then I multiply 1,500,000 by 30, and get 45,000,000; 30,000 by 30, which gives 900,000, and 6,000 by 30, giving 180,000. I add all these products, and get 946,080,000 seconds in thirty years."

This answer was given in fourteen seconds.

SNAKES OVERRUN HOME.

The premises of William Horton, near Glendale, Iowa, are infested with snakes to such an extent that he and his family are in danger of being driven from their home. The snakes are a spotted variety of blue racer from two to four feet long.

Last summer Mr. Horton had a similar siege, and killed nearly a hundred of the reptiles.

The chief source of the snakes seems to be the family well, which stands near the back door, and from which the family has for many years drawn its water for drinking purposes. The serpents have even entered the house, one big one having been killed there.

So offensive became the old family well on account of the swarming reptiles that it became necessary to build a cistern for drinking water.

Mr. Horton's little children are kept out of the yard for fear they will be bitten. The slaughter of the snakes goes on daily, but the situation appears to be hopeless.

COURT DECIDES AGAINST JOHN D.

The sale of a tract of Pocantico Hills property to John D. Rockefeller by James T. Oussani, after the latter had made a contract last year, without an option, with the

Catholic Foreign Mission Society, to sell the tract to it, was set aside by the Appellate Division recently, and Oussani ordered to give a deed to the society.

The society bought an option on the property, of which the price was \$45,000. When Mr. Rockefeller heard this he purchased the property from Oussani at a price said to have been \$65,000. When he heard later, however, how Oussani had jumped the price on him, the oil magnate was highly indignant, and took no part in defending the suit. He still desires the property, and is said to be willing to pay the society the \$20,000 profit which Oussani almost made at his expense.

Since the affair the society has built at Briarcliff, and does not need the Pocantico tract. Oussani says he will carry the case to the Court of Appeals.

NO OLIVE OIL SENT HERE.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies held a special meeting in Rome recently to discuss the alarming frauds in wines and olive oils in Italy and adopt means for stopping adulterations. Several titled persons have been brought to trial recently in connection with wine adulteration, as viticulture is one of the favorite means of support of the Italian nobility.

The olive oil investigation has proved that practically no genuine oil is exported to America, but, with few exceptions, cottonseed oil imported from America is refined, bottled and returned.

At the last meeting of the Chamber it was proposed to form a Department of Agriculture, to be organized and conducted precisely as that of the United States, and to turn over to the new department full jurisdiction over agricultural interests. It was also proposed to give the department power to establish schools throughout Italy, particularly in the south, for training farmers.

BELGIUM'S NEW WAR FOOTING.

Belgium, with a population of scarcely seven million, will shortly have the greatest army in proportion to the number of inhabitants of any European country, with the exception of Montenegro. According to a bill that has just passed the Belgian Parliament, every man of twenty is to be trained to bear arms, which will raise the war footing of the army to 340,000. The main provisions of the new act are:

First.—Every Belgian will be called to the colors in his twentieth year. Half of the number will, however, be subject to exemption in certain circumstances.

Second.—In time of peace the period of military service will be fifteen months for the infantry, twenty-one months for siege artillery and twenty-four months for the cavalry and field artillery.

Third.—There will be 55,000 men with the colors in time of peace and 340,000 men in time of war. Of the latter, 180,000 represent the field army and 160,000 to defend Antwerp, Liege and Namur.

INTERESTING NEWS ITEMS

AN OLD FRONTIER BATTLEFIELD.

Elisha Church, while engaged in ploughing on the J. B. Hendricks farm, six miles northeast of Petersburg, Ind., near the junction of the east and west forks of the White River, recently, gathered up lead bullets ranging in size from a pea to a good-sized marble. More than seventy-five bullets were found in a space not more than five acres in extent.

The bullets were found where the ground had been washed by a recent flood. Until recently the land was heavily covered with timber, and has been cleared for only a few years. Besides the perfect bullets a large number of flattened ones were found. The old Indian fort, an outpost of Fort Vincennes, was a mile west of Petersburg, and a battle probably was fought near where the two rivers join.

PLAN THREE MOUNTAIN LAKES.

The Italian Government is promoting a great undertaking for the construction of three huge artificial lakes in the granite mountain range of Sela, better known as Aspromonte. These lakes, besides irrigating a vast stretch of low lands, will furnish 15,000 horse-power electricity for industrial purposes in Calabria and Apulia.

Another rather similar reservoir is being created in Sardinia, in a malarious region bordering the Tirso River, which is destined to drain about 50,000 acres of marsh land and store up 330,000,000 cubic meters of water.

Private companies engaged in the task will enjoy special grants and privileges from the State, into the hands of which the entire plant will pass gratuitously after sixty years' concession.

The estimated outlay on the project is reported to be about \$20,000,000.

A REMARKABLE PROGENITOR.

At El Bierzo, a town in the Province of Leon, Spain, a man has just died whose family comprised six generations. He was a farm laborer, named Adriano Roman, and died at the age of 114 years. The following descendants survive him:

One son, 88 years old.

Three grandchildren, 63, 59 and 58 years old, respectively.

Thirteen great-grandchildren.

Forty-five great-great-grandchildren.

One great-great-great-grandchild.

Adriano San Roman died in the full enjoyment of all his faculties and possessing excellent eyesight. Sixty-two direct descendants attended his funeral, besides 240 relatives. The dead centenarian always recommended his descendants to abstain from the use of alcohol and tobacco and to live as much as possible in the open air. His 88-year-old son enjoys excellent health. Counting those who have died, San Roman had ninety-eight descendants in the direct line.

GAMBLING REVENUE \$10,600,000.

The British punter is not to be deprived of his pet amusement, at least not just yet. There seems to be no immediate danger, after all, that gambling will be suppressed in France; the magnificent casinos, which sport their gay minarets, whitewashed walls and tempting salons in the face of unsuspecting tourists along the Riviera, the seaside, or inland watering places, are not to be closed.

Until the year 1904 gambling was illegal in France. But a certain toleration was extended to a number of casinos and clubs. In 1907 a law was passed which allowed gambling and the establishment of casinos on the condition of complying with certain formalities.

The State was to have 15 per cent. of the profits, and casinos could be opened only with Government permission. As soon as the law was passed applications poured in, and in a short time 187 casinos or gambling saloons were authorized.

Last year 133 new establishments were opened. There had been a similar average in the years that preceded.

The amount of revenue collected by the State was \$2,800,000 in 1907, \$5,000,000 in 1908, \$7,400,000 in 1909, \$8,600,000 in 1910, and last year the revenue was about \$10,600,000.

A LEGEND OF NIAGARA.

Once upon a time a young Indian maiden was about to be given in marriage to an Indian chief. The girl detested the man, and rather than marry him she preferred death. On the very day of the wedding, while the guests were assembling, she made her way to the river, and quietly and unobserved drifted down the Niagara toward the falls. Another moment and she would have been dashed to pieces below. Bidding farewell to the world, and with a prayer upon her lips to the all-powerful Great Spirit, she awaited her awful doom as the little craft plunged over the edge of the thundering Niagara.

As she was about to be swallowed by the waters the thunder god, Heno, saw her and caught her in his arms. Then he brought her safely into a cave behind the falls, where he cared for her until she married one of his own sons.

From that time on, with the help of Heno, she became the protectress and guardian over her people, warning them of approaching danger and giving them counsel and advice. Once, when pestilence and famine were threatening her people, she bade them leave their homes and depart for other lands. As soon as they were gone a great serpent appeared, which came to poison the waters and to devour the people. The god Heno saw the monster and slew him with a thunderbolt. As the huge serpent floated down the stream its body folded, and this fold of its body caused the waters to be deflected into the horseshoe falls to be seen to this day on the Niagara.

The god Heno now took all his children up to heaven, and whenever he thunders in the clouds above, the echo is heard in the waters of the Niagara Falls below.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JUNE 25, 1913.

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ITEMS OF CURRENT NEWS

Frank Reeh and Otto Hornburger were taking breakfast recently in Ashland, Ohio, when Reeh cut open a hard-boiled egg. Inside, firmly imbedded through both yolk and white, was a safety-pin. Half of the egg, with the pin still in place, was retained, and is ready for inspection by all doubters.

Water has ceased rolling down the Cornell dam spillway of the New York City waterworks at Croton, after an estimated waste of thirty billion gallons this season. Heavy rains came earlier than usual this year, and the volume of water in the Croton reservoir was the largest in the history of the waterworks.

Some one who defrauded the customs officials on arrival at the port of New York, and had the satisfaction of escaping detection, sent a letter to Collector Loeb the other day enclosing two one-hundred-dollar treasury notes. The letter, which was typewritten, read: "I am sending \$200 which should have been paid on articles brought into New York in my trunk." It was signed, "One who wishes to observe the Golden Rule."

Congress may purchase Belmont, the large town house and estate of the late Asa Barber, as a home for the Vice-Presidents. The movement is being agitated by Mrs. John A. Logan, widow of the famous Civil War general. She would have the place be a sort of second White House. "Congress should purchase the property," she said, "and in view of the small salary paid offer it to the Vice-Presidents as a home."

One does not usually connect crocodiles with a health resort—rather the reverse—but the creatures are quite a feature of the Indian bathing place of Manghapir, about nine miles from Karachi. This town is a place of pilgrimage for pious Hindus, but it is chiefly famous for the value of its waters in the cure of the dread scourge of leprosy. The waters are hot, and more than 60 per cent. of the sufferers who bathe there annually, it is said, are cured. The crocodiles are rather noteworthy in that they live in the hot water, apparently suffering no inconvenience from its temperature or medicinal qualities.

Franklin A. Briggs, who is 11 years of age, and lives at 468 Sixth Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., lost a new \$25 bicycle the other day that was presented to him by his mother, and detectives are looking for a shabbily dressed man, wearing dark blue clothes and in need of a shave. Franklin met the man at Bedford and Lafayette avenues, and heard an offer of 50 cents in real cash for an errand. The boy left his wheel with the man and went "around the corner" after a mythical suitcase. Of course, when he went back to report that no man had his suitcase at the address given the man and the wheel were gone.

Perhaps you have watched the evolutions of the battle-ship fleet in formation, and have wondered whether those great ships, preserving that perfect alignment and distance, must not be parts of one single whole. If you are on board one of them the illusion is still more striking. Perhaps you will not observe the slightest change in the line forward or aft in a day's time. One man in especial will never forget how, standing on the same spot on the bridge of the Rhode Island steaming northward from Peru, he saw the sun set three nights in succession over the identical funnel of the Maine, following behind. As the red ball sank into the South Pacific the smokepipe split it evenly to the watcher's sight, three nights running!

An absolutely new way of making a living has been invented by a young man in Berlin. The other day this person, well dressed, but without a job and with no funds, took his seat dejectedly in a street car. By and by a woman, laden with many bundles, got on and swung to a strap in front of him. The young man got up and gave her his seat. Also he had an idea. He bought a monthly ticket that entitled him to ride continuously on certain lines. Selecting stout women, package laden women and girls, scholars with arms full of books, and other persons who would rather sit than stand, he made them his customers. To these, as the car filled, he surrendered his seat, plainly stating that he expected a tip in return. He generally got it, and has been able, he says, to make a fair living.

Secretary Bryan and Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British ambassador, recently signed a renewal for five years of the general arbitration treaty between the United States and Great Britain which expired by limitation on June 4 of this year. The treaty provides for the arbitration by The Hague Court of any differences of a legal nature not affecting "the vital interests, the independence or the honor of the two contracting states," and which do not concern interests of third parties. A form of special agreement, covering the subject to be arbitrated, subject to the Senate's approval, is prescribed. The British treaty is the fourth of the arbitration conventions to be renewed this year, the others being those with France, Italy and Spain. Diplomats here are awaiting with much interest the expiration of the similar treaties with Japan and Mexico. The treaty with Japan expires by limitation on August 24. President Wilson has announced his willingness to renew it, but Japan has given no intimation of its purpose in the matter.

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

PEARLS OF HISTORY

The pearl is the only gem needing not the hand of man to bring to full perfection, and history affords ample evidence of the intense fascination it has always exercised among the people of every age. It is the oldest object of personal adornment.

Indian mythology often speaks of the pearl, attributing its discovery to the god Vishnu, who is said to have caused it to be drawn from the ocean for his daughter, Pandala. The records of the Romans, Babylonians, Persians and Egyptians always make mention of it. There was the wife of the Emperor Caligula, who, for an ordinary betrothal feast, decked herself with pearls to the value of \$1,650,000, and Julius Cæsar presented Servilla, the mother of Brutus, with a specimen valued at \$250,000.

Coming to more recent epochs, we find that Philip II, King of Spain, paid \$200,000 for a single pearl known as "Peregrina." Found in Panama, it was pear-shaped and weighed 134 carats. It was brought from India.

France, also, owns some exquisite examples. But the biggest pearl known is that which was once the property of the banker, Henry Philip Hope. Cylindrical in form, it is two inches long, four and a half inches in circumference at one end and three and a half inches at the other. It weighs 1,800 grains and is valued at \$60,000.

It is known that the beauty of the natural pearl sometimes proves evanescent. To retain its shimmering splendor, it needs air and light. Acids can affect them and emanations from the skin can destroy the precious bloom.

BARTLETT TO GO WITH STEFANSSON.

Captain Robert Bartlett, sailing master of the Roosevelt, in which Rear-Admiral Peary made his successful polar trip, will hold the same relative position—practically second in command—on the Stefansson expedition that starts in June for Arctic exploration. Vilhjalmur Stefansson made this announcement, adding that the largest body of scientific men ever assembled for an Arctic voyage will accompany him.

Captain Bartlett leaves at once for Ottawa, en route to Esquimaux, to attend to the loading of stores and supplies for the Karluk, the vessel that will carry the major part of the exploring party north. The Karluk is now in drydock at Esquimaux.

The presence of the scientists, thirteen in number, together with the explorer, his skipper and the crew, will make the expedition twice as large as when the Canadian government agreed to finance it. This will make necessary the equipment of an added vessel, Mr. Stefansson said. The selection will be made within a day or two, it is expected.

Stefansson expects to leave New York for Esquimaux shortly. By the first week in June the expedition will be ready to sail from Vancouver, according to present plans, and will proceed by way of Nome and Point Barrow, arriving there the last week in July. The autumn of 1916 is the date set for the return.

The expedition will be divided, a "southern party," comprising the scientists, probably to make its base at Simpson Bay, on Victoria Island. In this party will be Dr. R. M. Anderson, zoologist, commanding; Fritz Johansen, United States government biologist; J. J. O'Neil, mining geologist, of the Canadian Geological Survey; Kenneth Chapman and J. R. Cox, Canadian topographers; Henri Beuchat, anthropologist, Paris; Dr. D. Jennes, ethnologist; Dr. A. Forbes Mackay, of Edinburgh University, Shackleton's surgeon, and photographers.

With Stefansson on the "northern party" will be Captain Bartlett and crew; James Murray, oceanographer; W. T. McKinley, magnetician, University of Glasgow; George Malloch, geologist, and a specialist in strategraphy.

BANK NOTES.

The Bank of England note is about five by eight inches in dimensions, and is printed in black ink, on Irish linen, water-lined paper, plain white, and with ragged edges.

The notes of the Banque de France are made of white water-lined paper, printed in blue and black, with numerous mythological and allegorical pictures, and running in denominations from the twenty-franc note to the one-thousand franc.

South American currency, in most countries, is about the size and general appearance of United States bills, except that cinnamon, brown, and slate blue are the prevailing colors, and the Spanish and Portuguese are the prevailing languages engraved on the face.

The German currency is rather artistic. The bills are printed in green and black, and run in denominations from five to one thousand marks. The latter bills are printed on silk fiber paper.

The Chinese paper currency is in red, white and yellow paper, with gilt lettering and gorgeous little hand-drawn devices. The bills, to the ordinary financier, might pass for washing bills, but they are worth good money in the "Flowery Kingdom."

Italian notes are of all sizes, shapes and colors. The smaller bills—five and ten-lire notes—are printed on white paper in pink, blue and carmine inks, and ornamented with a finely engraved vignette of King Humbert.

The one-hundred-rouble note of Russia is barred from top to bottom with all the colors of the rainbow blended, as when shown through a prism. In the center, in bold relief, stands a large, finely executed vignette of the Empress Catherine I. This is in black. The other engraving is not at all intricate or elaborate, but it is well done in dark and light brown and black inks.

The Austrian note is printed on light-colored, thick paper, which shows none of the silk fiber marks or geometrical lines used in ordinary paper currency as a protection against counterfeiting. Each bears upon it a terrible warning to counterfeiters, threatening imprisonment "to any one who shall make, sell, or have in possession any counterfeit or facsimile of this bill."

THE SURPRISE FOUNTAIN PEN

A novelty of the greatest merit! It looks just like a genuine fountain pen. But it isn't. That's where the joke comes in. If you take off the cover, a nice, ripe, juicy lemon appears. Then you give the friend you lend it to the merry "ha-ha." You might call it an everlasting joke because you can use it over and over again. Price, by mail, postpaid, 10c.

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A cardboard finger, carefully bandaged with linen, and the side and end are blood-stained. When you slip it on your finger and show it to your friends, just give a groan or two, nurse it up, and pull a look of pain. You will get nothing but sympathy until you give them the laugh. Then duck! Price, 10c., postpaid.

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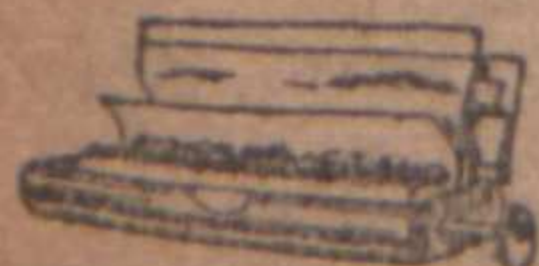


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Ventriloquist Double Throat

Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price: only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents, or 12 for 50 cents.

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FOUR WEEKS (A LOUD BOOK).



Has the absolute and exact shape of a book in cloth. Upon the opening of the book, after having it set up according to directions furnished, a loud report similar to that of a pistol-shot will be heard, much to the amazement and surprise of the victim. Caps not mailable; can be bought at any toy store. Price, 65c. by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



VANISHING AND RE-APPEARING EGG.—Very fine, easy to perform and it produces a marvelous and mystifying effect. Egg is made to appear and vanish right before the eyes. Beautifully made. Price, 25c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

LITTLE RIP'S TEN-PINS.



In each set there are ten pins and two bowling balls, packed in a beautifully ornamented box. With one of these miniature sets you can play ten-pins on your dining-room table just as well as the game can be played in a regular alley. Every game known to professional bowlers can be worked with these pins. Price, 10c. per box by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



The Bottle Imp.—The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so.

This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about. Price, 10c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SURPRISE PERFUME BOTTLE.



Those in the joke may freely smell the perfume in the bottle, but the uninitiated, on removing the cork will receive the contents in his hands. This is a simple and clever joke.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE SWIMMING FISH



Here is a fine mechanical toy. It is an imitation goldfish, about 4 1/2 inches long, and contains a water-tight compartment which will not allow it to sink. To keep it in a natural position, the lower fin is ballasted with lead. To make it work, a spring is wound up. You then throw it in the water, and the machinery inside causes the tail to wiggle, and propel it in the most lifelike manner. When it runs down the fish floats until it is recovered, and it can then be rewound. Races between two of these fishes are very interesting. Price, 25 cents each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



THE SPOTTER, OR THE EDUCATED DIE.—The performer exhibits a die. The Ace of Spades and five cards are now taken from a pack. The Ace of Spades is thoroughly shuffled with the other cards, which are then placed face down in a row on the table. The die is now thrown, and as if embodied with superhuman intelligence, the exact position of the Ace is indicated. Without touching the die, the performer picks up the cards, gives them a complete shuffle and again spreads them out. The die is rolled as before by any person, and is seen to come to a stop with the locating number uppermost. The card is turned over and found to correspond in position.

Price, 15c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gez whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch. It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 16 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



SPIRIT SLATE-WRITING.—No trick has ever puzzled the scientists more and created a greater sensation than the famous spirit-writings which appear between sealed slates which have freely been shown cleaned, carefully tied together and given to a spectator to hold. These spirits answer questions. Sold by us complete, slates and secret. No chemical used. Price, 75c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

THE FLUTTER-BY.



This mechanical flying machine is worked by a new principle. It looks like a beautiful butterfly, about 9 inches wide. In action its wing movements are exactly like those of a live butterfly. It will travel through the air about 25 feet, in the most natural manner. As flying toys are all the rage, this one should be a source of profit and amusement to both old and young. Price, 15c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



MAGIC CARD BOX.—A very cleverly made box of exchanging or vanishing cards. In fact, any number of tricks of this character can be performed by it. A very necessary magical accessory. Price, 15c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.



THE PRINCESS OF YOGI CARD TRICK.

Four cards are held in the form of a fan and a spectator is requested to mentally select one of the four. The cards are now shuffled and one is openly taken away and placed in the performer's pocket. The performer remarks that he has taken the card mentally selected by the spectator. The three cards are now displayed and the selected card is found to be missing. Reaching in his pocket the performer removes and exhibits the chosen card. Price, 15c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

JUMPING CARD.—A



pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.



APPEARING BILLIARD BALL.—A solid billiard ball, beautifully made, can be made to appear in the bare hands with the sleeves rolled back to elbows. Very fine and easy to do. Price, 35c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.



RISEING PENCIL.

The performer exhibits an ordinary pencil and shows it top and bottom. The pencil is laid on the palm, the performer calling attention to his hypnotic power over innate objects. The pencil is seen slowly to rise, following the movements of the other hand. The witnesses are asked to pass their hand around it to assure themselves no thread or hair is used. Price, 25c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



"KNOCK-OUT" CARD TRICK.—Five cards are shown, front and back, and there are no two cards alike. You place some of them in a handkerchief and ask any person to hold them by the corners in full view of the audience. You now take the remaining cards and request anyone to name any card shown. This done, you repeat the name of the card and state that you will cause it to invisibly leave your hand and pass into the handkerchief, where it will be found among the other cards. At the word "Go!" you show that the chosen card has vanished, leaving absolutely only two cards. The handkerchief is unfolded by any person, and in it is found the identical card. Price, 10c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.



THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive. Price, 15c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



THE DEVIL'S CARD TRICK.—From three cards held in the hand anyone is asked to mentally select one. All three cards are placed in a hat and the performer removes first the two that the audience did not select and passing the hat to them their card has mysteriously vanished. A great climax; highly recommended. Price, 10c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.